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ABSTRACT

The project here reported was conceived as a two-year effort involving analysis, interpretation, and dissemination. Its first year was funded to permit comprehensive, in-depth, comparative study of selected public school Adult Basic Education (ABE) programs in six metropolitan areas. The purpose was to utilize field research methods to construct a dependable normative description of the multifaceted reality of urban ABE. From the study of commonalities, it was proposed to construct an analytical framework of operationally relevant generalizations so that these programs may be better understood and predictions more reliably made about their development. The study was designed to go beyond a pro forma catalog of data about each city's program to analyze qualitative processes over time, particularly classroom interaction and the perspectives of students and teachers relevant to motivations, and perceptions of students and teachers of the program, each other, and their involvement in ABE. To do this, it was proposed to use interview and participant observation methods in a comparative analytical study designed to produce the beginnings of an inductive theory of practice of urban ABE in the public schools. Beyond description, the study was to be a practical analysis of existing practice. (Author/JM)

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ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF ABE EXPERIENCE IN THE
INNER CITY: TOWARD A THEORY OF PRACTICE IN THE
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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ANNUAL REPORT
May 1969 - June 1970



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ABE PROJECT
Center for Adult Education
Teachers College, Columbia University
May 1969 - June 1970

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Analysis and Interpretation of ABE Experience in the
Inner City: Toward a Theory of Practice in
the Public Schools

ANNUAL REPORT
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I. PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT AND METHODOLOGY

The Problem

Recent concern for creatively adapting educational programs to the unique needs of the urban poor has produced a variety of program efforts, often amid emotionally charged circumstances, with spotty, poorly documented results. Inner city demands for new and more relevant "quality" education have provocative implications for change in organization, form, content, methods and style of adult education. Planners and administrators responsible for developing and evaluating urban adult basic education in public schools have had to respond to community demands and opportunities afforded by the Adult Education Act of 1966 with little benefit from professional sources outside of their own immediate experience. Policy, research, program evaluation and professional education and training have not been systematically adapted to serve inner city target groups, particularly in illuminating critical operational issues and providing a sound basis for planned development.

Professionals concerned with making ABE work have been handicapped by the absence of a dependable picture of prevailing practice in urban areas within which to identify common practices and problems. Analysis of this many dimensional picture to identify the most important commonalities would permit the formulation of a set of operating-level generalizations with which to construct a reliable frame of reference for decision making. Against such a

frame of reference policy issues, major common problems and innovative practices could be identified, priorities for research and demonstration effort assigned, staff development needs clarified and benchmarks for program evaluation established.

To set out to systematically capture the complex and changing reality of urban ABE programs requires an effort almost unprecedented in the field of education. Not only would comparative data have to be secured from many cities about program structure and operation, but means devised to understand evolving processes of interaction among students, staff and administrators which explain the ways of program practice. And for this social and educational interaction to be intelligible, an exacting effort would be required to see the program and those relating to each other in it through their own eyes. Only then may priorities for planned change be charted with confidence.

To be useful to decision makers, generalizations made from this body of data should enable adult educators to better understand and predict the behavior of students and staff in ABE programs. Fully developed, such a set of generalizations would constitute an inductively constructed "theory of practice" indigenous to urban ABE programs as they operate in the public schools.

Because we have not had the benefit of this theoretical framework for asking the most relevant questions, research on urban ABE has been fragmented and largely unrelated to decision making priorities. When administrators turn to the professional literature they find a weak body of research either too particularized or generalized

to provide real guidance. Findings are seldom applicable beyond the institution in which the research or evaluation was conducted.

Similarly, quality of program evaluation has suffered from its separation from a theory of practice. Without reliable benchmarks pertaining to program structure, operation, interaction and the perspectives of those involved, the evaluator has had to rely on his own experience, mostly gained in other educational programs, and bits and pieces of the experience of others gleaned from the literature and professional meetings.

As a result, measurement techniques have frequently been indiscriminately used to measure only those aspects of program development most amenable to measurement. Qualitative factors of evolving interaction critical to program success have usually been ignored. Objectives are often prematurely defined. Efforts by both researchers and evaluators to "operationalize"--to develop "instruments" for study of arbitrarily selected aspects of the complex and evolving reality of ABE--have resulted in what Whitehead refers to as "the fallacy of misplaced concreteness." A common tendency for evaluators to arbitrarily set the order by which program consequences should have priority in measuring success has further obfuscated understanding. And seldom have they raised their sights from preoccupation with program "output" to assess the development of organizational capability to mount and sustain relevant programs.

Objectives

The project was conceived as a two-year effort involving

analysis, interpretation and dissemination. Its first year was funded to permit comprehensive, in-depth, comparative study of selected public school ABE programs in six metropolitan areas. The purpose was to utilize field research methods to construct a dependable normative description of the multi-faceted reality of urban ABE. From study of commonalities, we proposed to construct an analytical framework of operationally relevant generalizations so that these programs may be better understood and predictions more reliably made about their development.

The study was designed to go beyond a pro forma catalogue of data about each city's program to analyze qualitative processes over time, particularly classroom interaction and the perspectives of students and teachers relevant to motivations and perceptions of the program, each other and their involvement in ABE. To do this, we proposed to use interview and participant observation methods in a comparative analytical study designed to produce the beginnings of an inductive theory of practice of urban ABE in the public schools.

This approach was adapted from the work of Glaser and Strauss¹ as uniquely appropriate to a professional field such as ABE in which there does not yet exist an articulated theory grounded in the dynamics of the specific programs and processes involved. We saw in the concept of "grounded theory" provocative potentialities for practical decision making in educational policy, program devel-

¹Glaser, Barney G. and Anselm L. Strauss. The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research. Chicago: Aldine Press, 1967.

opment and evaluation, and for the generation of researchable hypotheses keyed to action priorities.

Specifically, the study was conceived as an attempt to understand how urban ABE is organized and how the functional dynamics of administration work--including planning, staffing, recruitment, program development, reporting, staff development and institutional linkage. We also planned to focus on the interactional dynamics of the classroom--student-teacher relations, socialization, social climate, uses of methods and materials, and definition of content. Finally, we proposed to attempt to understand the point of view of students and teachers--their expectations, motivations and perspectives defined in terms of opinions and corresponding action.

Beyond description, the study was to be a practical analysis of existing practice; to the degree that we could come to see what is happening in ABE programs through the eyes of those most directly involved, we anticipated we could better assist professionals to understand and predict behavior in these programs.

In its second year, the project will build upon theory developed out of our first year's work to examine selected innovative program practices. A series of four six-city studies are planned, each using comparative field methods and each analyzing one or two specific practices. Purpose is to identify factors--organizational, programmatic, interactional--which impede and facilitate adoption and development of specific innovations as the basis for developing guidelines for planners. A survey of urban ABE directors will be completed and results interpreted, including a set of national

norms pertaining to urban program practice. We will also conduct four regional dissemination workshops for ABE directors and professors of adult education to review our findings and further test them against the experience of others.

Program Development

The plan called for resident study teams to be mobilized in four cities. In each city a senior sociologist was to supervise one or two graduate students employed half-time to serve as participant-observers and interviewers focusing on classroom level interaction. The plan was slightly modified to permit Professor Anselm Strauss (University of California) to supervise field workers in both San Francisco and San Jose. Professor Eugene Litwak (University of Michigan) supervised field study of the Detroit R.E.A.D. program as well as the Urban Adult Education Institute, and Professor Blanche Geer (Northeastern University) supervised field research in Boston. Graduate students studying both Title III and the Fundamental Adult Education Program in New York were supervised by headquarters staff at Teachers College. Professor Lee Rainwater (Harvard University) agreed to serve as program evaluation specialist.

The field workers were attached to the programs under study for the academic year. Each was initially assigned a random sample of ABE classes stratified according to type and location. Field researchers were free to investigate other classes as the need for theoretical sampling arose. Their assignment was preceded by a week of intensive interviews conducted by a team from Teachers Col-

lege. One hundred and five interviews (averaging an hour) with directors, supervisors, counselors, teachers, and other officials were completed.¹ Data from interviews and from documents and records were used to prepare a series of background papers distributed as orientation for field staff.

Team interviews focused primarily upon organizational and administrative elements of ABE programming; the field workers supplemented this with data pertaining to social and educational processual transactions involving students, instructors, and other staff at the classroom level.

Field reports from the graduate student participant-observers were reviewed every two weeks by faculty supervisors and forwarded to headquarters. These field reports covered two types of activity: observation of classroom interaction and unstructured interviews with students, teachers, and staff.

Headquarters staff and consultants carefully reviewed field notes to identify commonalities and differences that might suggest conceptual categories for further analysis.

By mid-year, preliminary study suggested a coding scheme for classifying and analyzing field data. Major headings included: type of class, student characteristics, student perspectives, teacher characteristics, teacher perspectives, helping patterns, encouraging, teacher control, methods, materials and content, intensity of

¹A complete roster of respondents and the interview schedule, which was adapted in use to each type of respondent, are found in Appendix A-II.

engagement, social patterns, facilities, and student mobility among classes.¹

The scheme indexed specific variables inherent in patterns of interaction to permit assessment of their frequency and "cross tabulation" with other variables such as type of class (day/evening, ESL/basic education, school/community), and salient student characteristics (age, sex, ethnicity). Data on student and teacher perspectives were coded using an analytic framework suggested by Becker, Geer, and Hughes in their study of students at the University of Kansas.² Categories included were sources of information, expectations and opinions about the program, expectations and opinions about goals, and awareness of job and educational alternatives and community resources. These and all other items included in the coding scheme were products of some preliminary adumbration of apparent patterns of interaction or perception which emerged from early analysis of field notes. Several able consultants worked with headquarters staff in reviewing field reports: Professors Barney Glaser and Leonard Schatzman (University of California), Berenice Fischer (University of Wisconsin) and Thomas Leemon (Teachers College). Professor Anselm Strauss gave leadership in advising on the methodology of "grounded theory."

Headquarters staff coded all field reports--a total of 237--using the scheme described above. Paragraphs or incidents from

¹ See Appendix A-II for copy of coding guide.

² Becker, Howard S., Blanche Geer, and Everett Hughes. Making the Grade: The Academic Side of College Life. New York: Wiley, 1968, Chap. III.

field reports were pasted to 5" by 8" McBae Key Sort cards. Every card was punched by code number corresponding to "cross tab" variables such as type of class. The actual coded data on each card--the "dependent" variables--were also punched for retrieval purposes. All coders participated in several intensive training sessions prior to actual coding in order to clarify the meaning of categories and resolve ambiguities of interpretation. A reliability check indicated inter-coder agreement at 76 per cent. There was a tendency for some coders to assign certain data to a wider range of categories; for the purposes of our study this was not a serious problem.

Data secured from the initial team interviews in each city, and various documents and records, were coded according to another classificatory scheme devised for this purpose.¹ The decision was made to depart from the original idea of producing case studies of programs in each city and instead to produce comparative analyses of functional aspects of ABE administration such as student recruitment, staff development, etc. Coding of interview and documentary information was completed, background papers were prepared for field workers from these data, and writing of comparative analyses was initiated. However, due to the necessity of referring back to each city to secure necessary additional data, the production of the written analyses will continue into the second year of the project.

From the interview data, documents and records, and field reports a prototype urban ABE program model was constructed. One purpose of the model will be to provide a frame of reference for

¹See Appendix A-II.

next year's study of innovative practices.

A work conference for all project staff was conducted in February. The first day was devoted to a group consultation by six experienced ABE administrators from New York, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey. These informed practitioners reviewed with headquarters personnel, Professor Strauss, and Professor Litwak key concepts in the model which had emerged at that point in time and identified leads for further investigation. This panel of informants constituted an important vehicle for reality testing and refinement of conceptual categories. During the second and third day of the conference, field staff met to review work to date, to share experiences and insights, and to identify priorities for subsequent field work. Tentative theoretical categories were tested in the give and take of lively intellectual interchange.

Following the original program plan, in February (after the conference) a team from Teachers College undertook a week's study of one additional city, Washington, D.C., to test the validity of what we had learned and to assess the practical utility of this knowledge in understanding the most important aspects of ABE program operation. Consequently, we have been able to add data from the program in Washington to that secured from the other five cities.

The project's plan of operation was amended to enable us to more firmly verify the universality of factors identified as significant and to provide the basis for formulating national program norms through a questionnaire study. The questionnaire was mailed

to the directors of Title III ABE programs in the 122 cities in the United States of over 100,000 population that have such programs. A twenty-eight page instrument was pretested with the cooperation of ABE directors in thirteen cities of just under 100,000 population. On the basis of the pretest, the questionnaire was carefully revised and shortened to nineteen pages.¹ Returns will be analyzed and results reported during the second year of the project. One important yield from the questionnaire will be information pertaining to the location of innovative program practices, which the project will study in the second year of its operation. The questionnaire data on innovative practices will provide the basis for assignment of field workers to some twenty-four cities to undertake comparative analyses of selected practices.

The original design of the project was further amended to produce four demonstration training "packages" involving lesson plans and supporting materials for teacher training in areas identified by our study as critically important. Winthrop Adkins, Jr., Associate Professor of Psychology and Education at Teachers College, agreed to adapt his "life Skills" approach to develop prototype lessons suitable for in-service teacher training in ABE. The Life Skills program provides

- a) a systematic method for deriving a syllabus from actual problems by teachers or students
- b) a structured four-stage skill-learning sequence which frames the problem in a provocative way, dignifies what the learner already knows and feels about it, provides multi-mode, multi-level means for deriving new knowledge, and requires application of knowledge to a simulated or real-life problem situation

¹For a copy of the questionnaire, see Appendix A-I.

Titles of the four lessons are:

- Working Effectively with Emotions in the Classroom
- Getting Groups Involved on the First Day
- Identifying the Purposes of Questions in Group Discussions
- Using Student Motivation to Enhance Learning

Throughout the past year, headquarters staff have systematically reviewed, annotated and classified research studies, evaluation reports, and other materials that have implications for the development of an operational model of urban ABE. In this work we have been assisted greatly by the generous cooperation of the ERIC Center at Syracuse University and its director Roger DeCrow.

It need hardly be said that we are deeply indebted to the hundreds of ABE administrators, teachers, counselors, and students who through their cooperation and assistance made this study possible. We are particularly grateful to the directors in the six cities studied for their wholehearted cooperation and active assistance: Mrs. Doris Moss in New York, Mr. Ray Ferrier in Detroit, Mr. John Fox in Boston, Mr. Dalton Howatt in San Francisco, Mr. Bernard Sewell in Washington, D.C., and Mr. Leland Clark and Mrs. Esther Stone in San Jose.

THE FINDINGS: ABE IN AN URBAN SETTING

INTRODUCTION

Findings of our first year's study are presented in six sections which follow. They represent an interim report. Concepts reported are in process of development and will be elaborated and modified as additional data become available through results from the national questionnaire survey and the work of next year. We have used our experience in the six cities studied as the basis for this research-based normative description and analysis of current practice in the Title III ABE program. This will be used in the year to follow as a frame of reference for a comparative study of innovative program practices designed to produce a set of guidelines for decision makers.

Section II is an organizational model. It is a composite analytical description of the structure and functional dynamics of the six programs studied: setting, goals, staff, recruitment, sites and facilities, finance, materials, program development and counseling services.

Classroom interaction is described and analyzed in Section III with specific attention given the functions of attendance maintenance, rules and conventions, instruction, an ideology of minimizing failure and teacher control.

Sections IV and V are devoted to the two most important actors in ABE programs, the students and teachers respectively. These sections describe their characteristics and analyze motivations and perspectives--the way they see themselves in the program, each other, the program as such and, in the case of the teachers, their administrators and supervisors.

The role and problems of the counselor and his relationships with teachers and students is dealt with briefly in Section VI.

In Section VII selected implications are suggested for changes in policy, administration, program and staff development. These tentative recommendations, as well as the other concepts adduced, are subject to modification on the basis of further testing in our next year of study.

These findings represent the product of the hard work of a team of able people. Consultants Leonard Schatzman and particularly Barney Glaser provided seminal analysis of field data which influenced our definition of key conceptual categories. Responsibility for synthesis and initial drafting of Section II was assumed by Alan Knox, of Section III, IV, V and VI by Jack Mezirow, Gordon Darkenwald, Bart Landry and Rita Breitbart.

II. AN ORGANIZATIONAL MODEL

INTRODUCTION

Purpose

The purpose of this statement is to present an analytic model of the organizational characteristics of urban public school adult basic education (ABE). This model is designed to describe both the structural characteristics and the functional dynamics related to the operation of the ABE program, aside from the class unit. Uses of this model include the development of guidelines for the study of urban public school ABE programs, and the specification of innovative and effective practices to facilitate their diffusion from one ABE program and their adoption by another. This model is based on actual variations in practices within urban ABE programs in six cities that were studied in depth. However, the model was designed to facilitate generalization beyond the six cities. The six cities in which these programs are located are referred to by code names. The references to specific cities and practices are intended to illustrate the generalizations in the model and not to provide a cohesive description of program activities in any of the cities.

The statement begins with a brief description of the basic components of the ABE unit of the schools, followed by an identification of some major elements of the national and community settings in which the ABE unit operates. This is followed by a description of the typical structural elements in the organization and administration of ABE. The remainder of the essay consists of a series of sections, each

describing the structure and functioning of an aspect of the ABE activity including goals, administrative and instructional staff, counseling, materials, recruitment, facilities, finance, and program development.

This statement is one of several that have been prepared to describe the functioning of the total urban public school ABE program. The present statement describes the larger system of the ABE organization and its outside relationships with the school and community. The description of the organization includes relationships between classroom units and the administrative structure. Outside relationships include arrangements to obtain funding, facilities, materials, teachers and learners. Together, the sections of this essay describe the ABE organization as it attracts people and materials, and makes available the opportunities for the teaching-learning transaction. The other statements describe the smaller system surrounding the teaching-learning transaction that typically occurs in the classroom unit as a teacher and a group of ABE students interact, including detailed descriptions of transaction, learner, teacher and counseling. Each contains those references to aspects of the other that are necessary to achieve its primary purpose.

General History

Most ABE units were established as large and somewhat separate programs during the mid 1960's in response to the availability of federal funds. Although many units were established in a series of organizational decisions, the crucial initiatory act was the designation

of an ABE coordinator to administer ABE programs under Title IIb of the Economic Opportunity Act or Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Typically this had occurred by the end of 1966. In the larger cities, especially those in which many immigrants settled, there were long-standing programs of adult elementary education and Americanization. These functions continued after the establishment of the ABE unit, in some cities as a part of it and in some cities as a separate program. Separately funded and organized units with an Americanization orientation have continued in Beech and Hickory cities. Prior to the mid sixties, the ABE programs were small. For example, in Ash City, during 1965, less than three dozen adults completed the 8th grade certificate. In other cities, such as Maple City and Walnut City, the present ABE program had little precedent. Typically, someone who was working in or close to the ABE area was selected to direct the new ABE unit, usually as the only full-time staff member involved at the outset. For instance, in Ash City, the first ABE coordinator was an elementary school principal with social work experience and some recent course work related to adult basic education.

THE ABE UNIT

The purpose of this section of the statement on the ABE unit is to provide an overview of the components of the unit that will be analyzed in greater detail in the succeeding sections of this statement.

Unit of Adult Education Division

A separate ABE unit in the public school adult education division mainly reflects the availability of earmarked federal funds originally from Title IIb of the Economic Opportunity Act, then transferred to Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Some additional funds are derived from welfare, employment, and poverty programs. In comparison with the present federally funded ABE programs, the former efforts were small; and the rapid growth of the ABE unit during a few years is reflected in the structure and functioning of the unit.

In almost all instances the ABE unit is a part of the adult education division of the schools. Generally this division does not include the vocational adult education programs, which are under the jurisdiction of a director of vocational education for the schools, who is typically a counterpart of the director of adult education. Other parts of the adult education division are the evening high school programs and the non-credit adult education programs. If some ABE programs, such as the Work Incentive Program (WIN) or Welfare Education Plan (WEP), are separate from the "Title III" program, most of them will be within the adult education division. In some ABE programs there are specialized support services such as materials development, counseling, in-service education, public relations, and finance, that are part of the total adult education division and relate to the ABE unit as well. In almost all ABE programs, the various financial procedures related to payroll and purchasing are handled by these units in the school system with perhaps someone associated with the adult education division assisting with

parts of the process. Materials development and public relations tend to be handled on a project basis by the relevant units of the schools, such as when the audio-visual department produces a film on ABE and charges the ABE unit for the costs.

Basic Ingredients

The essential ingredients of ABE are a mentor and a functionally illiterate adult interacting for the purpose of increasing the adult's literacy level. In this statement, the term illiterate is used to refer to any adult whose literacy level is less than 9th grade of English usage. The mentor might be a teacher in a group setting, a counselor or tutor in an individual setting, or a writer of mass media materials such as the Operation Alphabet television series. In practice, almost all ABE mentors are teachers in a group setting, but some new mentor roles are being established, such as those associated with language or learning laboratories.

It would be nice if the mentor were very competent and the illiterate adult were very willing to spend the time and attention on the learning tasks so that achievement would be great, but such criteria are difficult to establish. When they are established it will be easier to distinguish between excellent, average and ineffective ABE programs. In the meantime, intent is sufficient--intent to teach and intent to learn. The intent of the schools is to reach and to teach functionally illiterate adults. The definition of literacy varies greatly from country to country, but in contemporary America it has been defined by public school adult educators as the equivalent of the communication skills and substantive knowledge of 8th grade; and more

recently high school equivalency has been suggested as the criterion of functional literacy.

If the ABE unit is to attract and retain some illiterate adults, it must develop ways to bridge the gap between the social system of the schools and the social systems of the illiterate adults in the target population it wants to reach. To do so is no easy task. Most of the ABE instructors teach adults part-time in the evening and spend the rest of their working time teaching children full-time during the day. During the past few years there have been a few efforts to increase the proportion of other persons as ABE teachers. This has been more evident, and in some respects easier to achieve, in co-sponsored programs such as WIN or WEP, or Manpower Development and Training (MDTA) programs, in which the roles of the Labor Department or Welfare Department make the employment of persons without local teacher certification more acceptable exceptions to the preparatory education part of the school system.

There is typically at least one full-time ABE administrator (in the larger systems there are more) and some program administrators who work directly with teachers. Often the program administrators are part-time with the ABE program, on top of full-time jobs as teachers, counselors, and administrators in the preparatory education day programs for children and youth. For some part-time program administrators this arrangement creates competing demands for their use of their time, with the highest priority typically going to the full-time day responsibilities.

Most of the ABE programs are held in school facilities, and most of the funds are federal but channeled through the state, with a largely hidden local "in kind" contribution, such as use of facilities.

Unit Functioning

An ABE unit is operating when ABE administrators are working with others to establish ABE goals, are arranging for facilities, staff, recruitment of participants, and finances; when mentors are establishing objectives, selecting and organizing learning experiences, evaluating, and engaging in the teaching-learning transaction; when teachers, administrators, and specialized curriculum staff are selecting and preparing instructional materials; when counselors or others are assisting in the diagnosis, course placement, achievement testing, educational guidance and sometimes referral and job placement of participants; and when functionally illiterate adults are finding out about the ABE program, deciding to participate, engaging in learning activities, and leaving the program after some degree of success or failure.

Other people are also important parts of the operating ABE social system--the school board members who allocate local funds to make the ABE program viable, the school business manager who assists in the development of different procedures that are necessary for an adult program, and the representative of a community group such as a church or a union that co-sponsors an ABE class for some of its members. In addition, an ABE program is influenced by other programs in the community, which are similar to ABE and which are serving various segments of the same general target population. It is this type of pattern of interaction over time that the model outlined in this statement should help us to better understand. One use of this model is to assist in the identification of the ingredients and circumstances that contribute to the effectiveness of specific practices.

The next section of the statement describes the national setting of federal and state government, professional associations, and ABE programs in other school systems with which an ABE program may interact.

NATIONAL SETTING

National Organizations

People in an ABE unit interact with people in organizations outside the local community, such as federal and state government, institutions of higher education, professional associations, and other ABE programs. The United States Office of Education (USOE) unit concerned with ABE administers the allocation of legislative appropriations for ABE, coordinates reporting, and encourages more effective programming. The impact of federal decisions on local programs is illustrated by the influence of federal guidelines for state plans, but also by fluctuations in the level of federal funding. The reporting and allocation of funds within each state are channeled through the state education department. The recently established HEW regional offices include an ABE staff member whose emerging role includes acting as facilitator and idea broker. Part of the ABE federal funds are allocated for special projects including staff training and demonstration projects, activities in which institutions of higher education have been active. Some of the ABE administrators have contact with their counterparts in other communities through associations such as the National Association for Public Continuing Adult Education (NAPCAE); the Adult Education Association of the U.S.A. (AEA); and a variety of other regional and national professional associations. Nationally and in some states there are councils of ABE

coordinators. In recent years, urban ABE coordinators are gaining greater solidarity and visibility with policy makers as they band together within the state, region, and country to press for improvements in the ABE program.

Interchange

The foregoing vehicles for interaction facilitate the interchange of ideas and occasionally the exchange of staff members with other ABE programs. It would seem that the likelihood of another ABE program becoming familiar and an interchange occurring is increased when the other program is similar, has done something somewhat innovative or effective, has tried to become more visible, and when a "third party" has assisted in the process. A major "third party" has been NAPCAE as it has sponsored meetings, and a clearinghouse. Demonstration projects and training institutes funded under Title III 309 of ESEA have also served this purpose. Unfortunately evidence of the impact of these special projects has been fragmentary and anecdotal. However, a growing number of ABE staff have attended ABE training programs and several demonstration projects have presented evidence of impact. Information about ABE programs is moderately available, and the extent of familiarity of an ABE administrator regarding ABE in other communities depends mainly on the extent of his own information seeking efforts. For instance, some ABE administrators attend meetings of ABE staff, request and read newsletters and clearinghouse materials, visit other programs and request copies of their materials. As members of their staff attend meetings they share highlights with those who did not through brief oral or written reports. By contrast, others concentrate almost exclusively on their own programs and patiently discover what others have long since developed.

The relation between the local ABE program and the state ABE office is substantially influenced by the process of state reporting to the USOE and the preparation and implementation of the state plan. However, the largest city in the state often pays less attention to the state plan because of the traditional lack of effective working relationships between the largest cities and state government. Consequently, the primary concern for the state plan in the selected cities was for the purpose of maximizing allocations of federal funds.

COMMUNITY SETTING

Public Image

Most school systems tend to have a generalized public image that shifts slowly over time and varies from one segment of the community to another, but which is the way in which the schools tend to be perceived in the community. Like all public images, it is only partly accurate. Unfortunately, there is little evidence regarding the public image of ABE. The way in which the community perceives the school system would seem to influence the functioning of the ABE unit, and to a very small extent the image of ABE would influence the school system generally. In most cities the ABE administrator expressed the belief that the ABE program was gaining in visibility and prestige. In communities in which there is strong criticism of the public schools generally, this seems to be reflected in more and greater problems related to local ABE funds, and funding ABE programs through other sponsors. A more positive public image seems to contribute to the attraction of learners, teachers, and co-sponsors of classes. For instance in Ash City, there was variability

from neighborhood to neighborhood of the city. In poorer neighborhoods composed heavily of first or second generation immigrant families, there was substantial community involvement with and support for the ABE program, and a resistance to efforts to disrupt programs. In other poor neighborhoods, local organizations tended to view ABE with distrust as a traditional establishment program, and there was substantial unwillingness to even talk together. There is less indication of the impact of the ABE image on the school system.

Currently in most cities there seems to be little public awareness of and commitment to ABE. The general public image of adult education appears to be a "night school for those who missed it earlier," but it tends to be vague and mildly positive. This general image tends to influence decisions related to ABE. For instance, if the image of ABE is strong and positive, an illiterate adult would be expected to be more likely to decide to participate in an ABE program. Also, a favorable image increases the likelihood that school board members will commit substantial local funds. This policy commitment is important because the ABE participants do not pay the program costs, as tends to be the case in much of adult education, so that the benefits of the ABE program must be communicated to policy makers who do not experience the benefits directly. The extent of local support for ABE, which might be reflected in the calls and letters communicated to a school board member, tends to vary considerably from neighborhood to neighborhood. The evidence of this variability is fragmentary and impressionistic. A major factor seems to be optimism that conditions can be improved. Where this is lacking, there is a lack of support for ABE and other public

services. The least responsive neighborhoods have tended to be low economically, high in mobility, and low in formal organizational structures. In similar ways the community setting influences most of the inputs into the ABE program.

Target Population

An aspect of the community setting that is especially important in the functioning of the ABE program is the nature of the target population of functionally illiterate adults. This target population can be specified according to size, socio-economic and ethnic characteristics, attitudes related to education, and social organization. When the target population is large, and especially a large proportion of the community, not only is the problem of illiteracy greater, but so is the problem of raising local tax funds for ABE. The characteristics of the target population, such as educational, occupational, and income levels, unemployment rate, and present literacy level and English language facility would seem to establish the conditions of curricular relevance. Variations in these characteristics related to interests and readiness might be reflected in differences in materials and teacher approaches, but there was little evidence that detailed information about the target population was being used in practice in program development.

The education-related attitudes of illiterate adults influence their commitment to participate and to persist in ABE programs. Their experience in family, work, church, and voluntary associations produce the level of awareness and social skills that to varying degrees

facilitate their participation in an ABE program. If daily experiences in work or church result in a level of expectation and optimism about the desirability and feasibility of substantially higher levels of literacy of illiterate adults, then ABE recruitment efforts should be fairly easy and successful.

A specification of the high priority knowledge and skill requirements of the target population in their major life roles contributes to need assessment to establish educational objectives. For instance, the proportion of persons who are illiterate in English but who speak another language and who want to learn English would be reflected in the relative size of the English as a Second Language (ESL) program; and the proportion of really hard core illiterates and unemployed would be reflected in methods designed to recruit them. In these ways, the ABE curriculum can be adapted to local interests. This local adaptation is not strictly by neighborhoods, however. For instance, in Oak City, one location for ABE classes was serving adults from all over the city, and in one neighborhood with a large number of illiterate adults there were no ABE classes being offered.

Co-sponsors

To the extent that illiterate adults are involved in informal groups and formal organizations, these community organizations can be co-sponsors of ABE programs and as a result facilitate participation. For instance, if a church or a union with many illiterate adults as members becomes a co-sponsor of an ABE program as an effective way to achieve some of its objectives, there are clear implications for the use of an organizational setting in which participants have a history of

shared experience at the outset of the program, for materials development, and for follow-up experiences. In this way, the individual's experience in the organization makes it easier to recruit him into the ABE program co-sponsored by the organization, to select and develop materials that are of interest to him, and to provide opportunities to use the newly acquired higher levels of literacy. Some churches provide child care along with facilities and recruitment assistance. Additional types of community groups include employers, higher education, welfare, housing, health, penal institutions, community corporations and CAP agencies. From these groups, ABE programs receive facilities, equipment, materials, learners, opportunities for job placement, and occasionally non-certified teachers. In these and other ways, the community setting influences the teaching-learning transaction and other operational aspects of the ABE unit.

There is a growing commitment to co-sponsorship of ABE classes as an effective practice. There is, however, little evidence from the field to support this commitment. If co-sponsorship includes only the provision of facilities, then it is relatively widespread. In the Title III funded programs in Beech and Maple cities, more than half of the ABE locations were in non-school facilities. However, school facilities more often housed two or more classes. If co-sponsorship is defined as active assistance related to recruitment, staffing, and materials, then very few instances can be cited. The theoretical value of co-sponsorship has not been reflected in practice.

Other ABE Programs

The community setting also contains ABE programs that are outside of the public school ABE unit, and these other ABE programs can interact with the ABE unit, if only in the extent to which their existence is a source of competition. Prior to 1965, about the only ABE program was the one that was serving the foreign born which had an Americanization emphasis and was using local and sometimes state funds. As ABE programs were established during the last half of the 1960's, somewhat different target populations were assumed. In practice, all programs have increasingly reached adults with substantially the same characteristics. As a result, in some instances the competition for participants in a neighborhood has become intense, but in other neighborhoods the programs work out an arrangement that minimizes competition. The other ABE programs are perceived to be more neighborhood oriented as a result of a greater proportion of ABE teachers from the neighborhood who are not certified by the local board of education. However, persons associated with the Title III ABE programs tend to point out the lower level of teaching skills possessed by the teachers in the other ABE programs. The number, size, and effectiveness of these other ABE programs will influence the extent of interchange with the ABE unit and the extent to which the unit and/or the other programs are influenced. Some other ABE programs, such as those associated with MDTA and WIN will compete with Title III programs for participants, especially if stipends are provided. However, because the size of the target population is so much larger than the combined number of participants in the various programs, the competition is not necessarily undesirable. Some degree of coordination has been provided by such arrangements as Coordinated Area Manpower Programs (CAMP).

Increasingly, programs such as WIN and WEP are co-sponsors of ABE programs, especially when there are too few participants for a separate program.

Other Organizations

Also relevant are social systems such as housing, welfare, health care, and job opportunities that relate to the settings in which the participants should be able to perform more effectively if the ABE program is successful. The limited supply of jobs that require only an 8th grade education discourages some ABE participants, who are seeking employment and who are aware of the unemployment rate for adults with an 8th grade education. For an illiterate adult to complete the equivalent of 8th grade only to find that it really does not matter has major implications for the adult, the ABE program, and the other relevant social systems. One way of better understanding the functioning of the ABE unit is to identify the aspects of the community setting to which the ABE unit relates and to describe the ways in which it does so.

ABE units vary in the extent to which they are related with other organizations. The relationships may be related to inputs of learners, teachers, and materials. Regarding learners, the ABE unit may try to increase its visibility which will result in more referrals from other agencies. A few ABE programs receive a majority of their participants from agency referrals, but in general ABE administrators discuss the importance of referrals but have failed to develop effective relationships. The relationship may be related to program activities and include arrangements for field trips and facilities use. The relationships may also be related to placement of those who complete the ABE program in jobs or further education. The way in which these relationships develop

depends primarily upon the effectiveness of the ABE unit staff in encouraging the relationship. However, the other organizations also influence the relationship. For example, in Walnut City, fluctuations in the local employment situation were clearly reflected in ABE enrollments and attendance. In Beech City, one ABE program reported that the Welfare Department seemed to sabotage the ABE program because it threatened the passive dependency of the welfare recipients.

ABE ORGANIZATION

Staff Organization

The ABE unit is typically a part of the adult education division of the schools, although the official titles of the unit and the division vary greatly from city to city. The ABE administrator reports to the director of adult education who typically reports to an assistant superintendent of schools. The size of the ABE program and staff is somewhat related to the size of the city and the target population. In the larger programs the ABE administrator and some of his program administrators devote full-time to ABE. The variability is substantial however. In some comparably large ABE programs in the larger cities, the range is from only one full-time ABE staff person in Ash City, to more than three full-time ABE staff in the regular program in Hickory City. In smaller programs the ABE administrator may be the only person who devotes full-time to the ABE program. The lack of full time staff is partly the result of uncertain annual federal funding and inadequate long term commitment by the local schools. Reporting to the ABE administrator are some program administrators and supervisors who are sometimes called

teachers-in-charge. The teacher-in-charge is typically a full-time school teacher or administrator during the day, who in addition works part time supervising ABE classes in a geographic area. There may be non-instructional professional staff such as counselors or community relations specialists who may report both to the ABE administrator and to another administrator in the school system for units such as guidance or home and school relations. Almost all of these staff members other than the ABE administrator work a few hours a week with the ABE program and full-time with some other part of the school system. This is especially so in Oak City with its primary reliance on part-time staff. This heavy reliance on part-time ABE staff poses problems related to staff commitment and coordination as illustrated by trying to find a day and time when all concerned might meet together.

The program administrators and supervisors devote most of their ABE time to staffing and student advisement. Staffing may include selection and formal in-service training, but typically it consists primarily of informal supervision and assistance to ABE teachers. The program administrator tends to be the "cement" that holds the components of the ABE program together. When this vital full-time role is lacking, as in Oak City, the program tends to be smaller, to include primarily the easy-to-reach participants, and to include few services beyond the classes themselves. The effective program administrator compensates for the lack of institutionalization of the ABE program as he assumes a more major role in the process of goal setting, acquiring needed resources, and assessing progress.

Most of the teachers are part-time with ABE and are full-time teachers in the elementary schools, because they have experience teaching

reading and arithmetic, and because they want to keep adult education teaching available as a source of supplementary income. This part-time teacher arrangement is further reinforced by provisions in union contracts and references to "moonlighting" opportunities in recruitment efforts by administrators. Some teachers teach only in the ABE program, a few perhaps full time if there are many day classes. Each class is largely an autonomous unit, especially if there are only one or two classes at a location.

Coordination

Largely due to the different funding source, the ABE unit is more independent than are most of the other parts of the adult education division. Programs similar to ABE for the native-born, such as Americanization and English as a Second Language (ESL or EFL) may or may not be under the jurisdiction of the ABE administrator. The division of the total ABE effort into separate units within the schools tends to reflect several considerations, such as sources of funds, English as the native or a second language, school or non-school locations, type of application of what is learned (e.g., job, family), and evening or day classes. A major basis for sub-division of larger ABE units, especially in cities with a degree of decentralization, is geographic region. In these instances, a district supervisor, or center coordinator, or teacher-in-charge has general supervisory responsibility for many of the day to day operations. This tends to produce some conflicts resulting from the cross-currents of relationship with the district superintendent or principal on the one hand and the director of city-wide adult education or supervisor of ABE on the other.

In some cities, Title III funds have expanded the previous programs, while in others the Title III programs are separate and parallel. The existence of as many as four similar ABE programs increases the difficulty of coordination. When ABE and other adult education programs are housed in the same facilities, the coordination between the two is likely to be greater. Some adult education programs of the schools, such as MDTA, are not under the supervision of the director of adult education. The coordination between ABE and other programs under the supervision of the director of adult education will tend to be greater than is the coordination of the other adult education programs not under the director's supervision. Some people may work on ABE and on other adult education programs, which facilitates coordination. This occurs in the instance of specialized staff for curriculum or guidance. Other coordinative efforts include supervisory staff meetings every month or two, faculty meetings once or twice a year, attendance reports every week or two, bulletins, and individual conversations in person or by phone.

Relation to School System

The ABE unit comes within the policy and procedural jurisdiction of the school board and of the superintendent's office, but the primary dependence of the ABE program on federal funds provides a degree of independence. School board members tend to be only slightly familiar with the ABE program. However, in some cities the strong orientation of some board members towards community problems results in their demonstration of greater support for ABE than is typically provided by the central administration. The continued receipt of informally allocated resources

from the school system depends more on the good will of middle level management than on formal policy statements. For instance, in many instances the use of certain school facilities and equipment depends primarily on the willingness of day school personnel to share them. The part-time staff appointments are individually arranged within school system guidelines, sometimes included in the union contract, regarding pay scales and limits on the amount of "moonlighting." In Oak City, the personnel bureau of the school system performs the major role in the hiring of ABE teachers and tenure rights makes firing by anyone very difficult. The ABE unit typically uses facilities under one of two arrangements. Under a centralized arrangement, such as in Ash City, the adult education division has automatic access to facilities after a set time in the late afternoon. Under a decentralized arrangement, such as in Beech City, the use of space in any school must be negotiated with the principal or district superintendent for that school. Use of day school equipment such as typewriters or shop tools tends to require additional arrangements. Materials are sometimes loaned but, if consumable, tend to be on the ABE budget. The non-instructional support staff of the school system such as business office, custodial, and clerical staff tend to service the ABE unit both in formal ways that entail, for example, budget transfers, and in informal ways. Another example of formal service is charging a staff person in the school accounting office to the ABE budget; and an example of informal service is handling ABE accounting procedures as part of the regular work load, as part of the "in kind" matching by the school system to accompany federal or state funds.

The extent and type of use of non-school facilities and staff depends in part on school system preferences, in part on the orientation of community groups, and in part on the educational approach of the ABE

administrative staff. Regardless of the extent of use of resources from other parts of the school system and from outside the school, the ABE unit is typically very dependent on various units of the schools, such as personnel, business, and facilities. As a result, more so than for most organizations, the ABE unit must win and maintain informal cooperation from people who do not have to cooperate, in order for the formal organization to work. Examples include arrangements for matching of outside funds, for use of school facilities and equipment, for full-time teachers to teach ABE classes, for the audio-visual department or the public relations office to service the ABE program, and for school libraries to be open in the evening.

Institutionalization

Some potential ABE participants prefer classes during the day and in non-school facilities. To the extent to which the program occurs out of the evening and out of school buildings, the organizational structure of the ABE unit will change. Day classes are more likely to lead to ABE facilities and full-time staff with the stability that these bring. Classes in non-school facilities lead to somewhat less dependence on day school personnel and somewhat greater interdependence with community groups. This may or may not lead to greater institutionalization depending on the degree of stability and continuing support for the ABE program. In contrast with the clear-cut assignment of responsibility and lines of command that characterize the stereotyped military organization, much of the ABE organization is based on informal arrangements based on friendships, arrangements that easily "come unglued" and require constant attention by the ABE administrators. This lack of institutionalization

of the ABE unit partly reflects its newness and partly reflects its marginality within the schools.

One major issue that confronts those associated with ABE programs is the extent and type of institutionalization of the ABE unit that is seen as desirable. At one extreme, it is a nuisance and a diversion of resources that could enable the ABE program to reach more people to have administrative staff constantly negotiating and reinforcing informal arrangements in order to provide resources that in most organizations are provided routinely. At the other extreme, one of the strengths of the ABE program is the flexibility that results from its lack of institutionalization, which in the day school tends to discourage experimentation. The ABE program provides a more permeable boundary of the school system and as a result allows for a greater degree of cooperation between school and community groups than is typical of the preparatory education program. A trend that will have major consequences for years to come is the extent and type of institutionalization of the ABE program. Too little may threaten its continuance. Too much may undermine its flexibility and responsiveness.

Demonstration Projects

In several of the selected cities, there was in operation a demonstration center funded under federal funds from Section 309 of Title III of ESEA. Each center was funded for a limited number of years for the purpose of demonstrating to the entire field the effectiveness of selected procedures, and in addition being of some benefit to the local ABE program. In each instance, there was an expectation that the demonstration center would have a somewhat different clientele or would

service them differently. In actuality, this clientele was very similar to that in the regular ABE program. However, the cost per participant hour was much greater than that for the regular program, in part because of the larger proportion of full-time staff, the more expensive staff services in addition to the ABE teachers, the smaller teacher-student ratio, and their own facilities for day and evening use.

Two of the demonstration projects were strikingly different in their working relationships with the regular ABE program. In one city there was substantial cooperation, including sharing of staff, and an effort to become continued on local budget funds as part of the total ABE program. In another city, there was almost no interaction between the demonstration center and the regular program, much misinformation, and some efforts to exaggerate differences, that appeared to minimize the likelihood that the demonstration center would ever function effectively as part of the total ABE program.

GOALS

Policy

The newness and marginality of the ABE unit contribute also to the lack of formalization of goals and objectives, which tend to be implicitly instead of explicitly stated. Project proposals and agreements with co-sponsors are instances in which more formal statements are prepared. The implicit goals tend to be reflected in the priorities that operate in practice, regarding such considerations as the characteristics of the target population; the balance between recruitment and instruction; the balance between reaching larger numbers of participants and assisting a

smaller number to progress faster and further; the relative emphasis on the several ABE content areas such as reading, writing, arithmetic, and consumer education; and the balance between the acquisition of basic competence and its effective application. Occasionally, such as in a brochure prepared by the ABE director in Beech City with the assistance of staff at the local and state levels, some of the implicit priorities and objectives are stated explicitly. Because the ABE unit lacks both a policy board and a full-time faculty, most of the goal setting is by the administrative staff, when, in best practice, they appraise learner needs and negotiate with school system and community groups for the best arrangements they can obtain. In some programs, the teacher-in-charge can influence curricular objectives substantially. In many instances goals are set by default as the path of least resistance is followed. Some of the most important policy decisions relate to the balance in emphasis between the various ways in which the learners should change as a result of contact with the ABE program. Typical substantive emphases include communication skills (reading, writing, arithmetic), content mastery (consumer education, vocational information, aids to urban living), self-image (confidence in one's ability to learn and adapt and take action), and a range of coping abilities (presenting oneself effectively in a job interview, locating a relevant social agency in time of need). In practice these emphases tend to cluster around preparations for high school, work, or other adult roles such as homemaker and parent. In Hickory City, several administrators emphasized that the goals were multiple, including high school equivalency, vocational, general improvement and consumer education as a vehicle for teaching reading and writing. Some ABE

administrators have emphasized that the ABE objectives must be broader than reading, and must be related to adult roles to provide relevance and motivation for the learner. There appears to be little participant interest in the 8th grade certificate as a major goal.

Establishing Goals

This process of goal specification is influenced informally by persons in a variety of components associated with the ABE unit. Given the fluid organizational structure, the administrator or teacher with strong commitments and at least moderate effectiveness can substantially shape the program with which he is associated. A co-sponsoring group with a strong sense of direction regarding ABE can also influence goals substantially. The adult participants provide a substantial short-term counterweight against any change in direction that does not seem to them to be useful. Their high rate of turnover minimizes their influence on long term trends as those who do not like a given change drop out to be replaced by those who do. A variety of persons within the school system and in state and federal government influence program directions less by proposing goals than by vetoing some of the proposals by the ABE staff. Professors of adult education may have a slight influence on ABE goals through the ABE staff with whom they come in contact as regular students and as workshop participants. In Walnut City, state and federal guidelines were perceived as having substantial influence on the local ABE program, such as by shifting the emphasis towards ESL and day classes.

Regardless of the stated goals and pressures towards certain outcomes, the major source of influence lies with the individual teacher who is granted great latitude. In Hickory, one administrator indicated that the

teachers did not follow even the general guidelines. The adult learners tend to establish demands regarding what the teacher must do minimally if the learners are to continue to attend, the other influences on goals tend to establish constraints regarding what the teacher may not do without incurring some limiting action, and the individual teacher can operate in ways of his own choosing within the gap between demands and constraints. One of the crucial decisions made by the teacher is the extent to which he will individualize instruction for each learner. The extent of individualization within the ABE unit is largely the reflection of the interest and willingness of the teachers. In Maple City, although the emphasis is on remedial reading and math, the individual teacher has almost complete freedom in the classroom, and this is substantially the case in Ash City. Another major decision is the extent of interest in raising the learner's morale. In Hickory City there was a major emphasis on teaching the participant what he wanted.

Reaching the Poorest

An example of an unresolved policy issue is the extent of emphasis that the ABE program should place on reaching the poorest adults. The problem is that most ABE programs lack an effective way to resolve the issue and to establish a workable policy that contains priorities for the allocation of resources. Differing opinions or "positions" are held by participants, community groups, other agencies, ABE teachers, ABE administrators, school system administrators, school board members, state education department staff, USOE staff, and congressmen. Most "positions" are variations on one of two themes--"reaching the poorest" and "maximizing service."

The "reaching the poorest" emphasis is stressed primarily by some federal staff who point out the "War on Poverty" origins of the legislation and the need for binding congressional and federal administrative support based on a commitment to social relevance; and by representatives of community organizations, especially those with a militant, minority group progress orientation. The basic premise of this position is that most of the ABE funds should be aimed at the poorest and least literate and that the word "basic" in ABE stands for helping adult to develop the basic competencies needed for them to survive and progress in society, of which only a small portion is literacy in the communication skills sense. The supporting arguments include: Few agencies are actually servicing the poorest; literacy and other problems of the poorest are interrelated and effective solutions will relate to all problems of being poor, the entire community will benefit because if the poorest are helped they will be constructive instead of disruptive members of society; most of the services designed for the poorest will be easily adaptable for the less poor while the reverse is seldom the case; the less poor have the strength to organize politically to demand that they too receive the services that are initiated with the poorest; when the less poor benefit from ABE programs they are more likely to move from the neighborhood and to reduce the pressure for the program to continue; and the relative position of the poorest may be worsened because, not having participated in the program, they are labeled with yet another failure and, having been left behind again, they may become even more disillusioned and embittered. The conclusion is that if the program is intended to serve the poorest, the procedures should be those best designed to most

effectively attract and retain the poorest, even if the unit cost is substantially higher.

The "maximizing service" emphasis is stressed primarily by the ABE administrators, by some of the participants, and by school personnel, who point out that the primary role of the schools is education and not broader programs of social welfare, and that the primary target population consists of those who show up. The basic premise of this position is that, in view of the very limited funds for ABE in relation to the enormity of the problem, resources should be concentrated on those who are most likely to benefit from them, and that as the least poor and most ready to move graduate from illiteracy and poverty then the resources can be transferred to the group below who have the best chance of benefiting from the resources. The supporting arguments include: The resources, orientation, and image of the schools are more relevant to educational assistance than to broader social welfare programs; other agencies in the community are better equipped to provide broader social welfare programs; we lack the technology and knowledge successfully to assist the poorest; those who are most readily attracted to existing programs are the ones who are most likely to benefit from them; substantial success comes slowly to the poorest because they have the farthest to go; by focusing on the already upwardly mobile poor, the success of the program can impress legislatures and foundations with its achievements and help to obtain more funding; a more homogenous clientele facilitates classroom and agency management; and minimizing the proportion of persons who are less socialized to middle class styles also minimizes the need for institutional change. The ABE administrators who stressed this "maximizing service" emphasis referred to the disaster analogy, in which limited resources are used to help the most people who

can make the most progress.

The major implication of this and similar policy issues that confront the ABE unit is the lack of procedures for the resolution of the issue. In practice the "numbers game" related to enrollments and continued funding result in primary emphasis on "maximizing service" with only lip service given to reaching the poorest as a way of reducing pressure from those who emphasize this position. An alternative to the selection of either of these two positions, which has been discussed but not really tried, is the compromise position of placing primary emphasis on maximizing service but including a secondary but concerted effort to reach the poorest. Throughout the entire program, the materials and teaching methods should emphasize adult life tasks related to work, family, and community both as an assistance to coping and as a source of readiness for efforts to increase literacy. The secondary effort to reach the poorest should be reflected in effective procedures to reach and to teach them. The benefits will include upward mobility for the poorest, community improvement, and institutional change for the schools.

ADMINISTRATORS

Characteristics

As with public education generally, most of the ABE administrators are former teachers, and they become administrators for the same reasons as most people in educational administration. The term administrator includes not only the person in charge of the ABE program (director or coordinator), but also supervisors and teachers-in-charge and others in

professional positions in the ABE unit aside from the classroom teachers. Included in the other category are district supervisors who have some supervisory responsibility for ABE in a neighborhood, and specialists in staff roles related to guidance, curriculum, materials, and in-service education. Although the ABE administrator is usually a man, some of the other administrative staff are women, in part because the subject matter content of ABE draws heavily from elementary education with its large supply of women teachers. As illustrated by Maple City, most of the male ABE administrators are former elementary or vocational education teachers. The administrative staff tend to be middle aged (35-50), somewhat younger than city school administrators generally. Although most ABE administrators are former teachers, many with administrative certification, a few are not. The proportion of non-teachers seems to be growing somewhat and they come from a variety of backgrounds such as social work, the military, and the clergy. However, the number of non-teachers is too small to discern trends at this time. The ABE administrators tend to be action oriented with strong commitments about social progress and with optimism about the extent to which adults can change.

Differentiation

As the ABE unit becomes large enough to justify additional program administrators and as the existing staff gains sufficient experience to recognize the need for more specialized staff inputs, a formalized differentiation of function occurs. This is reflected in staff who concentrate solely on learner recruitment, or counseling, or program development (especially materials), or in-service education of teachers, or other support services. In Beech City, for instance, in one of the

ABE units, a major portion of the in-service training is handled by a specialized staff that is separate from the teachers-in-charge whose functions are primarily supervisory and administrative exclusive of in-service training.

Recruitment

The recruitment process is informal, largely within the school system and local community, and based heavily upon prior contact and acquaintance. When a person is identified who shows great promise as an ABE administrator, who is not a certified teacher in the system, ways can usually be found to make an appointment. However, this only happens occasionally, as in Hickory City for a former teacher in a private school who lacked a certificate for the local public schools. In general, salaries for ABE administrators are comparable to those for assistant principals in the rest of the schools, which tends to set a ceiling on recruitment efforts. In the past, another restriction on recruitment has been the temporary nature of ABE administrative positions which has reflected the annual federal funding and the lack of long-term commitment by the local school system. In Ash City and in Maple City there is only one full-time ABE administrator and in Oak City no one person who is providing full-time leadership for the total ABE program. This lack of local commitment to full-time administrative positions also makes recruitment of able administrators more difficult. However, after five years of federal funds for ABE, there is a growing belief that funding will continue and that future plans can be made. The financial incentives vary substantially. For instance, in Maple City an ABE coordinator who has met the qualifications as a teacher and

as a counselor receives about \$7 per hour and works up to ten hours a week. In Oak City, the registrars receive \$13 per hour.

For the part-time staff, the ABE administrative positions tend to be attractive ways to "moonlight," especially since the job does not involve children. Major incentives include administrative experience and visibility as an aid to subsequent promotion in the system, the challenge of being a pioneer and a "sort of entrepreneur," the satisfaction of doing something to help solve some of our urgent social problems, and whatever feelings of power and status that come from being an administrator. The feeling of making an important contribution to the mission of an organization is illustrated by the distinction between being a manager and being a leader. In a well organized unit of an organization, a manager can for a period of time just keep things going smoothly. However, in the typical ABE unit many important components are negotiated from other groups and an innovative and flexible administrator must constantly exercise leadership if he is to provide the "human cement" to enable the unit to function. As with most occupations, the set of incentives attracts persons who in terms of such qualities as ability and integrity find the incentives attractive, and it is out of that talent pool that staff selections can be made. There are several important types of qualities that are relevant to the ABE administrator. Three relevant qualities are having a sense of direction, attracting and retaining others who contribute to the ABE program, and working effectively with a variety of agencies and organizations.

Responsibilities

The job responsibilities of the ABE administrator vary with the specific position. Two examples may be sufficiently illustrative. The ABE unit administrator tends to deal with almost all aspects of administration. In a gross sense, his job is to keep the model outlined in this statement functioning. A major malfunction in any component can threaten the entire unit. The problem is compounded because of the necessity to coordinate the use of a component such as classroom facilities between the day and the evening program. One result is that the program administrator may report to two persons. In Maple City, this dual reporting role was illustrated by the effort to gain acceptance of the ABE program by the day and evening school administrators as part of "their" program. In Beech City, it was illustrated by the district supervisors' changing relationship to one of the ABE programs. The supervisors viewed their role as neighborhood development and coordination between programs, but the line responsibility of the ABE teachers-in-charge was centralized with the director of that ABE program. In Walnut City, there was both a center coordinator and a division principal with responsibility for the facilities in a geographic area.

Because the external pressures tend to be on reaching as many people as possible with the available money, and there is very little program administrator staff time available to assist him, most of his time is spent on solving the most urgent problems so that the unit will continue to function. For instance, the administrator is more likely to spend time on problems of staff performance and attrition than on

programs of staff recruitment and in-service education. In Hickory City, several administrators estimated that they spent more than half of their time on recruitment of participants. It is not necessary that the administrator perform the tasks himself. In Ash City, a secretary maintains attendance reports and contacts adult students after three reported absences. This problem solving effort is greatly facilitated if the administrator is familiar with the total school system and is able to work effectively with relevant offices on an informal basis. When the administrators come up through the ranks in the school system, they are more likely to relate to teachers and administrators in other offices in a non-threatening and collegial way. When, as in Ash City, there are few full-time administrators, this type of supervision and coordination is difficult. However, the appointment of part-time ABE administrators who work full-time in another unit of the school system can facilitate coordination with that unit. Little time is spent on long-term goals or on evaluation. Many ABE administrators indicated that they were so busy just keeping the ABE program going, that they could not justify spending time trying to improve it. Major attention is given to staffing, facilities, materials, finance, and community relations.

Supervision

Staffing is especially important to the success of the unit, and when functioning well is an elaborate process that includes informal ways of attracting able people as a supplement to the formal personnel system, careful placement, and supervision that emphasizes increased competence, and sometimes discourages inept staff from continuing. There is a recent trend towards tenure rights for part-time ABE teaching. For

instance, in Oak City, a regular teacher in the school system who teaches ABE classes three evenings a week for three years, may be discontinued only by "showing cause." This means that the program administrator must sometimes apply pressure to discourage an ineffective ABE teacher from continuing, with a formal "show cause" or "due process" procedure as a last resort. When a staff is functioning poorly, an administrator may spend much of his time dealing with emergencies. In the locations with a concentration of ABE classes, a teacher-in-charge will perform many of these supervisory functions. Because the unit is so little institutionalized, as reflected in the lack of standard operating procedures that are accepted by other units, much time is spent on negotiating informal arrangements and on reinforcing them so that they remain operable. The director of the Maple City ABE program endeavored to formalize some of these informal arrangements as a basis for more effective operation. The supervisor, usually a part-time teacher-in-charge, is likely to be a woman, and she spends time primarily on a variety of arrangements for individual classes. A great deal of responsibility for program effectiveness is placed on the supervisor. In Beech City, one of the ABE programs indicated that the function of the TIC was creative supervision including staff conferences and helping students in relation to the program and subsequent placement. One of the potential shortcomings of this decentralized supervisory effort is a lack of system-wide planning. As a way of dealing with this coordination problem, in Beech and Maple Cities, the coordinators met monthly and the administrator had informal contact with them three or four times a month. Staff supervision is a major part of the job, along with student advisement, and arrangements related to facilities, record keeping and instructional materials.

A crucial test of the competence of the program administrator is effective rapport with ABE teachers. Few of the staff have entered an ABE administrative position with substantial background in the administration of ABE programs. Some had completed a course or two, but most of the competence is acquired on the job. Many have participated in federally sponsored ABE workshops. In Hickory City, the ABE administrators are not required to take in-service education but may do so. There is little in-service training or staff development sponsored by the school system that is specifically oriented to ABE. This in part reflects the part-time staff and the few persons who are available to meet at any given time and location. In Beech City, there are plans to individualize in-service training to provide as much flexibility for teaching the ABE teacher as for teaching the ABE student.

Turnover

In practice, the turnover of ABE administrators has been small. When Administrative staff leave the ABE program they do so primarily to accept more attractive positions or because they are dissatisfied. They are seldom fired or forced to leave. In part because of the informal and personal basis of recruitment, it is difficult to remove an unsatisfactory staff member who does not want to leave. This is compounded by the limited supply of competent replacements.

The ABE programs with full-time administrators are too recent to discern clear trends in the career lines of the staff. One unusual relationship is the full-time director of ABE who reports to a part-time director of adult education. This alters some of the typical expectations regarding relative prestige, mobility, and promotion.

MENTORS

Characteristics

The category of mentors includes all persons who perform an instructional role, such as teachers and teacher's aides in a group setting, counselors and tutors in an individual setting, and writers of instructional materials. Regarding the size of the ABE program, the range was from almost a thousand part-time teachers down to less than fifty. Relative to the number of adults without any high school education, the range was from one ABE teacher per fifteen illiterate participants in Ash City down to one ABE teacher per eight illiterate participants in Maple City. Most school systems distinguish between certified and non-certified instructional staff. Almost all of the mentors are part-time with ABE. Although some ABE teachers are in their mid twenties, about three-quarters are between 28 and 35. In Ash City, ABE teachers are expected to have passed a three-point course about adult education. In the regular ABE program in Maple City, they are expected to have two years of teaching experience in the city school system. With the exception of the widespread practice that most ABE teachers teach elementary school during the day, there is no clearly defined preparation and career line for ABE teachers.

Performance

Most of the certified ABE teachers teach children full-time in the day and work two or three evenings a week in the ABE program for extra compensation. However, some teachers who are not working full time elsewhere do not follow the five to ten hours a week pattern, but work upwards to twenty hours a week, especially if they teach day-time ABE classes.

Many characteristics of the ABE program work against the appointment of full-time ABE teachers. Included are uncertainty of long-term funding, limited availability of school facilities in the day time, less attractiveness of a full-time job working primarily in the evenings, higher costs per hour for full-time teachers than for part-time arrangements that do not cover most fringe benefits, the administrative problem of long-term commitment to teachers who are not performing satisfactorily, and the interest of preparatory education teachers as expressed at contract negotiation time in preserving adult education teaching as an option for "moonlighting." As a result, in Ash City, only about one per cent of ABE teachers do so full time. In Oak City, the range is from two to thirty hours a week of ABE teaching with anything over twenty hours a week classified as full time. In Oak City, the ABE teachers who taught during the day were less satisfied with the arrangements than those who taught in the evening. In Walnut City, a lower percentage of the ABE teachers had full-time teaching jobs during the day than was the case for other adult education teachers in the system. In Hickory City, all ABE teachers are certified "day" teachers who must stop "evening" teaching after six years for one year and may then resume.

Although good teachers are always hard to find, there tends to be a waiting list, so the ABE program can be somewhat selective. A shift towards school system personnel office participation in the selection of ABE teachers is restricting the extent to which the ABE director can directly influence the selection process. Some city schools refer to teaching adults for extra pay in their recruitment of day teachers and specify hourly rates of compensation for teaching adults in the union

contract. Some of the non-certified instructional staff have teaching experience somewhere but are not certified in the ABE unit's city or state. In Hickory City, if a teaching position cannot be readily filled with a certified teacher, the ABE administrator has some latitude in obtaining approval for a non-certified teacher. In Oak City, the teacher aides typically perform substantially the same tasks as the teachers but have a junior college education and reside in the local neighborhood. Some aides are persons who had been enrolled in the WIN program. Money is included in the ABE budget to pay aides. In Ash City, there is a position of assistant to the teachers that is filled by persons who are qualified substitutes but who are not certified as permanent teachers. They are paid one dollar an hour more than aides. The remainder tend to be in assisting positions sometimes termed para-professional. Included are tutors and aides who work for pay, and volunteers. The para-professionals who work for pay tend to be from the neighborhood and to lack teaching experience. The volunteers have a variety of backgrounds but most of them are middle class. For instance, in Oak City, one ABE center used five volunteers during a semester, including a retired elementary school principal, a highly intelligent person who had not completed college, and a credentialed teacher who did not want a full-time job. They did individual tutoring with slow learners. The volunteers must complete a six-meeting orientation course. The school system is also offering an in-service course for teachers on the use of aides and volunteers. In the demonstration center in Hickory City, the volunteers were deemed not satisfactory.

The recruitment and selection of certified teachers from the system tends to be formalized, with prerequisite courses, exams, eligibility lists, and screening committees. In Walnut City, enough day teachers ask to be able to teach evenings that there is not need to recruit in order to fill positions. In Oak City and in Hickory City, the role of the school system personnel department restricts the ABE administrator's role in teacher selection. The recruitment of para-professionals is less formal, with former ABE students and contacts with co-sponsoring community groups as primary sources of referrals. The hourly rate for certified ABE teachers ranges from approximately the hourly rate they would receive for day teaching, although there is substantial variation, down to about half that amount. For instance, the hourly rate for ABE teachers is less than \$7 in Maple City, about \$7 in Ash City, Hickory City, and Walnut City, although with experience it can go up to about \$8 in Walnut and Hickory Cities, and more than \$10 in Oak and Beech cities. The hourly rate for para-professionals tends to be about half the rate for professionals. For instance, in Walnut City paraprofessionals largely from WIN classes work with teachers at slightly more than \$2 per hour. In Ash City the aides receive \$3 an hour. In Maple City there are three hourly rates for various categories of para-professionals ranging from less than \$2 to more than \$5. Some ABE programs have no funds to pay para-professionals.

In addition to money, incentives for ABE teaching include: the satisfaction obtained from working with adults who can apply directly what they learn, the lack of discipline and other problems associated with education for children and youth, working with motivated learners,

and working in a relaxed atmosphere with a high degree of autonomy. As was pointed out in Beech City, enjoying the working relationship with the teacher-in-charge is an incentive to continue because, due to the newness and lack of institutionalization, teachers have but a fragmentary knowledge of the total ABE program and often perceive the central administration of the ABE program as remote.

Teacher job security is limited, as there is typically no tenure and few fringe benefits. This reflects the uncertainty of federal funds and the lack of local commitment to continue the ABE program if federal funds were withdrawn. Some union contracts have made it more difficult to terminate an unsatisfactory teacher. Even in Hickory City, with no tenure for ABE teachers but a strong union, the ABE administrator must defend all teacher terminations to the personnel department.

Almost everyone associated with the ABE program would prefer a larger proportion of minority group teachers, but the small proportion mainly reflects the limited supply of qualified minority group teachers. Most of the school systems reported efforts to increase the proportion of minority group teachers. In Walnut City, there was a smaller proportion of minority group teachers than participants. Part of the reason was that those who were qualified were upwardly mobile and difficult to retain. In Oak City, few of the counselors were minority group and one-seventh of the teachers, and again the problem of qualifications was reported as a major reason. In Ash City, it was reported that about thirty per cent of the minority group teachers in the total school system were teaching in the ABE program, a higher proportion than for the remaining teachers.

One way in which an administrator can increase the proportion of teachers who have characteristics that he deems desirable, is to informally encourage persons with those characteristics to enter the formal recruitment and selection process. There are others who can help in this process. For example, in one of the ABE programs in Beech City, both the teacher-in-charge and the district supervisor recommend to the program director qualified persons whom they believe should be selected.

Competence

Although the para-professionals may have highly specific duties, the ABE teacher is given most of the responsibility for most of the crucial educational decision regarding objectives, subject matter emphasis, materials selection, instructional methods, and evaluation. Given the ways in which programs are typically organized, an ABE teacher must have substantial competence to be successful. Not only is it difficult to teach reading, but to work effectively with illiterate adults requires other abilities. The other abilities that are emphasized vary somewhat from community to community. In Maple City, although the ABE teachers, especially those who worked full-time, did not receive equivalent pay and fringe benefits, they were characterized as high caliber and dedicated. Also emphasized was staff contact with community organizations, by one of the ABE programs. Although almost all of the ABE teachers in Oak City were elementary school teachers during the day, an administrator stressed that preparation in elementary education was not necessary, and that four years of college and the ability to relate effectively with the adult participants were important criteria for

selection. In Walnut City, the criteria for ABE teacher selection were warmth, know-how and a sense of organization. Many were ex-nuns. Persons without a college degree could be credentialed to teach ABE classes if they had strong program support. There were no substantial differences between the full-time and part-time ABE teachers, except the advantages of stability and the disadvantages related to tenure that the full-time ABE teachers provided for the administrator. In Beech City, one of the ABE programs emphasized teaching ability as the main criterion, and another listed credentials, empathy and flexibility. Persons associated with the first program expressed the belief that the second program placed too much emphasis on empathy with the community at the expense of teaching ability in some appointments. ABE teachers in federally funded programs did not have to hold a teaching license and related personnel procedures. A portion of the ABE teachers were on the 5-year maternity leave from the school system.

To assist adults to learn how to read and function in basic areas, in a way that maintains and enhances their self concepts as adults, is a very demanding task, sometimes especially so for persons who are used to working with young students in other ways. While the teachers have great individual responsibility, they tend not to have many collective responsibilities as a faculty, in large part reflecting their part-time status with the ABE unit and their full-time allegiance elsewhere. The lack of a collective faculty position on policy issues related to ABE has resulted in greater power and flexibility for the administrators, but the increasing inclusion of ABE teaching in contract negotiations is changing the situation. There is some teaming up between instructional staff in relation to specific groups, but seldom on a broader basis

regarding materials development or evaluation. There tends to be little pre or in-service education for instructional staff beyond informal supervision and occasional workshops. For instance, in Ash City, with one in-service course on adult education, the in-service education available for ABE teachers during one year consisted of a few brief sessions during the year and staff supervision. Staff competence primarily reflects experience and selective retention.

The ABE teachers were consistently described as highly motivated and dedicated. However, an issue that was repeatedly referred to was the extent to which it was desirable to include as regular ABE teachers non-certified teachers from the neighborhood. Very few such ABE teachers were included in the regular programs in the selected cities, although they were more common in the demonstration centers. Some of the advantages of doing so were attributed to the use of para-professionals. The lack of evaluative benchmarks for ABE classes makes more difficult this type of comparative judgment between certified and non-certified ABE teachers. Especially with the heavy proportion of elementary school teachers who teach ABE classes, the emphasis on an "adult-oriented" approach tends to minimize the differences between the certified and non-certified teachers.

Recruitment

Because ABE teaching is a fairly attractive "moonlighting" option, there tends to be a list of willing teachers. Those who are satisfactory are retained, a process which the union contract tenure and due process provisions tend to make even more stable. The relatively small staff turnover reflects in part the stable program size based on a

fairly constant level of federal funding. In Oak, Beech, and Ash Cities, high stability and low teacher turnover were reported, about one or two per cent. In Beech City, this was facilitated by the retention rights that teachers have after two years. In one center in Maple City, only one out of seven of those who taught there the previous year did not return. A few new teachers are added to the ABE program each year to replace those who leave; some of them remain and the rest for a variety of reasons do not. Separation of ineffective instructional staff during their first few years of teaching is relatively easy because arrangements are short-term and part-time. The problem is often the difficulty of replacement with anyone better. After several years of ABE teaching, replacement is more difficult. A major alternative is to upgrade those who are available. However, in practice the programs of in-service education are thin and fragmentary. One reason is that there are few incentives to encourage the ABE teacher to participate in in-service education. Part-time arrangements make it more difficult to pay for preparation of in-service education. In the design of in-service education, decisions must be made regarding whether it is to be voluntary or mandatory, the extent of participation during a year, the areas of content to be included, the time and location of programs, the methods of learning that the teachers will use, and arrangements for recompense. For example, the in-service education program in Oak City and Walnut City was characterized as an optional annual workshop, courses at local universities, and available demonstration teaching and resource persons such as a helping teacher.

COUNSELING

Scope

An aspect of the instructional process is counseling and guidance related both to the educational program and to the application of what is learned. Ideally, aspects of this counseling role are performed by both teachers and specialized staff. Typically, there is only a small amount of counseling time available and that is related to the participant's study activities instead of their application of what they learn. For example, in Ash City, the least reported amount of counseling time was spent on personal counseling related to job, home, and personal problems. The focus was on the administration of tests, educational counseling, and assistance to teachers regarding their counseling function. One of the ABE programs in Beech City has a more application-oriented approach. The counselors do not administer tests. They help teachers with student placement, speak with community groups, and bring community resources into the ABE programs. The primary emphasis is helping the individual to better cope with the system. When community conditions are such that it is relatively easy for the person who completes an ABE program to apply what he has learned in worker or family roles, and when counseling is readily available through other agencies, then a counseling and placement role is not an essential component of the ABE program. Otherwise it is very important. For instance, In Oak City the ABE staff reported that they believed the counseling function to be a major factor in attendance. Illiterate adults tend to be insecure and to need help and advice with matters such as personal business and letter writing. When they realize that help is available from an ABE teacher or counselor they vie with each other for attention. One teacher reported that he does not

discourage the very unrealistic expectations that new ABE participants often have, but instead helps them to experience some substantial success as the basis for more realistic planning. Several Oak City ABE staff indicated that the greatest problem associated with the ABE program was the lack of extensive counseling services and psychiatric help. Pessimism about being allowed to use what is learned seems to be a major reason for non-participation in ABE. In Hickory City, a counselor reported that the practice of some community agencies of saying that jobs will be available after completion of the ABE program, when in fact they frequently are not, encourages some participants to drop out.

Functions

The counseling function is complex and if counseling objectives are to be achieved, counseling must be approached informally by most of the ABE staff. Most ABE participants are almost by definition very insecure so they need and appreciate personalized attention. However, there is little trained counselor time available per participant. In one of the ABE programs in Beech City, the counselor function is performed only by the teachers and teachers-in-charge. In one of the Maple City programs, there are no separate counselors; the counseling is done by the teachers and supervisors. In Oak City there are only two counselors, so the teachers help. In Ash City, each of the three major sites has counselors available, who also visit the other sites.

The majority of participants are young. In Beech City about 80 per cent were under forty. About two thirds of the participants were females. Fewer than 20 per cent receive welfare assistance. Although they are functionally illiterate, a large proportion had nine or more years of formal schooling. Some of the non-English speaking just want

to learn how to speak English. This is reflected in different relationships between the ESL classes and the other ABE classes. In Beech City, those who enroll in ESL classes do not typically transfer to ABE classes, whereas in other cities they typically do. The variety of characteristics of ABE participants and of the reasons why they attend result in much greater heterogeneity than is typical for preparatory education. However, the variability for an individual ABE class is comparable to that for public school adult education generally.

Many ABE students come with exceedingly unrealistic expectations regarding how much they can accomplish and how fast they can do so. This problem is further compounded for the addicts and the emotionally disturbed. At the first contact that a new participant has with the ABE unit, which sometimes involves registration and testing, it is apparent the extent to which academic counseling needs to be deemphasized in favor of personal counseling. The initial task is to establish rapport in ways relevant to the ABE program that will ensue. Counselor, mentors, administrators and support staff can all assist in the rapport building process along with initial diagnosis and placement, but to avoid confusion for the new participant one or two staff members must provide primary contact. In Hickory City, the initial contact between a new participant and the ABE program typically includes testing and placement in a class. A test, such as ABLE, is used, unless the entrant seems scared, in which case the testing is postponed. The placement is handled with an informal interview, during which, if the entrant says that he has completed intermediate grades, can read the phone book and

street signs, he is given a simple book to read as a way of estimating grade placement.

Tasks

Because there are few school discipline problems in voluntary ABE programs, such as are associated with mandatory programs of preparatory education, counselor time is available to help the participant understand and deal with the adult life responsibilities and problems that cause such a major portion of dropouts. In Maple City, Walnut City, and one of the programs in Beech City, the dropout rate each year is about 50 per cent as it is in Oak City, where the dropout rate for the regular adult school is about 20 per cent. In Ash City, Hickory City, and another Beech City program, the rate is one-third. The ABE absentee rate is also high. In Ash City, attendance is a big problem also. Follow-up of absentees is provided by phone or letter but because the undereducated are very mobile, many cannot be reached. Persistence rates appear to be especially low for those with the lowest literacy levels. The task of following up on attendance problems is complicated by both difficulty in reaching the absent participants and their preference not to be sought out (such as when the reason for non-attendance is because they are in jail). However, numbers, characteristics and reasons of those who drop out have great diagnostic value for program improvement. Most of the cities reported no follow up study on dropouts. There was a dropout study several years earlier related to one of the Beech City programs, but little evidence that the results were used.

It would appear that an effective division of responsibility for the counseling and guidance function would be to have the ABE teacher focus on educational and personal counseling that depend on a close

and continuing relationship with the student, and to have the specialized counseling staff focus on vocational counseling and referrals that depend on continuing contact with community agencies. Even if no one associated with the ABE program is competent to provide vocational counseling, the ABE administrators should be prepared to provide referral to persons who are competent to do so.

Benefits

The typical ABE participant who completes the program through the 8th grade equivalency spends about two years doing so. The likelihood of his doing so would seem to be related to the extent of staff contact with his out-of-school life, if only conversationally with his teacher. The lack of evaluation in most ABE programs has restricted the identification of likely ways to increase persistence. Another benefit of more evaluation is the contribution that is made to the participant becoming more test wise. For those who persist to about 8th grade reading level in one city, most take the 8th grade equivalency exam, and some testing about every 200 hours of instruction, typically administered by the counselor. In Ash City, most of the achievement testing is based on standardized tests, but resources are not made available for more adequate evaluation. The director believes that too much counselor time is currently spent on testing. He would prefer to use limited resources to offer more classes than to spend the same amount on evaluation.

Although there is considerable variation, in most programs about 80 per cent of those who complete the 8th grade equivalency go on to high school programs. Some programs encourage entry in the GED program

at that point. In other programs, however, there is a strong belief that for those who want to go on beyond high school, the GED program places too much emphasis on passing an exam and too little on acquisition of competence, and as a result encourages failure in post high school education. In most ABE programs there is little by way of placement, referrals, and follow-up related to jobs, housing, health examinations, or legal services. Ash City provides neither placement or follow up. Oak City also provides no placement, and one counselor suggested that they should not use their resources to do so when the Department of Employment is better equipped to help participants obtain jobs. At the demonstration center in Hickory City, the "biggest headache" was reportedly evaluation and record keeping, a function that tends to be taken more seriously in a demonstration project with less certainty about funding and thus more emphasis on being able to "present evidence."

MATERIALS

Sources

The flow of instructional materials through an ABE program is rarely formalized because of the great latitude granted to each teacher. Some teacher-made materials are developed by the teacher who uses them; others are developed and used by two or more teachers in the ABE unit. In Beech City, teams of ABE teachers have prepared curriculum units. In Ash City curriculum teams prepared guides to units. In addition, it was estimated that three-quarters of the ABE teachers in Ash City adapt at least some materials for their own use. Because materials are so closely related to the program development and instructional process, a central mentor role and high mentor commitment to their use is very desirable. In addition,

materials come from sources outside the unit such as commercial publishers, other ABE programs, other parts of the school system, and community groups. One task of the ABE administrator is to maintain a balance between the various sources of materials, but there is great variation in task performance. In Hickory City, each ABE participant is issued a library card and, as a member of a group of participants, visits a library to become familiar with appropriate books that are available.

Selection

The availability of materials from a variety of sources is only part of the concern about materials. Perhaps even more important is the way in which they are selected, the extent and type of use that they receive, and the evaluation that is made of their effectiveness. The ABE unit administrator is kept at least minimally aware of the major ABE materials by the publishers and by organizations such as NAPCAE. There is typically an effort made to acquaint the ABE mentors with these materials. One way is to assemble examination copies of as many materials as possible in one location and to provide each staff member with a list. This was done in Maple City. In Beech City, one of the early tasks of the ABE materials and curriculum specialist was to select and organize a carefully chosen materials collection that included both print and audio-visual materials related to reading and computational skills, minority group culture, and coping in the city. Staff can help to evaluate the materials and these evaluations can assist others to select from the list and can enable periodic modification of the list. The efforts to formally evaluate ABE materials have been fragmentary

at the local level. Some states and national groups have done so. Some communities have arrangements for approval of ABE texts by the school system. After that, the burden of responsibility tends to rest with each individual ABE teacher, and practice tends to be about as good as his individual performance. Unfortunately, the practice of paying teachers by the classroom hour does not encourage extra effort related to materials. Clearly, both mentor and administrator have important roles to perform in the decision-making process regarding materials. If they perform effectively, there will be a variety of materials on different topics, at different levels of difficulty, for both native born and foreign born. In Walnut City, an ABE administrator is centrally involved in materials selection. She commented that beginning ABE teachers tend to try to use too many different materials. In Oak City, ABE texts are approved by the city and ordered by the central office, but the ABE administrator has substantial latitude. In Beech City, an administrator indicated that ABE teachers may substitute packaged audio-visual materials for more typical teaching procedures, but usually need assistance to do so effectively. Sometimes, persons associated with organizations close to the target population can react to materials regarding relevance. In several cities, some instructional materials are selected from the activities of adulthood, such as tax forms, job instructions, drivers manuals, or hobby newsletters. In Maple City a specially prepared newsletter provides all ABE participants with reading material that meets most of the criteria, is of local interest, and includes articles written by the ABE participants. One of the problems related to published materials is the limited budget for materials

and related equipment in most ABE programs and the long delays encountered between when a teacher requests materials and when she receives them.

PARTICIPANT RECRUITMENT

Characteristics

The process by which new ABE participants enter the program is a crucial one. Although some participants do receive specific and immediate incentives related to job, welfare, or a stipend, most ABE participants enter the program voluntarily in anticipation of a more long-term benefit. The younger men and mothers without husbands anticipate a series of better jobs over the years; the younger wives and mothers want to help their children with school work; older adults are interested in pride and a variety of general uses of increased literacy. Some attend for social reasons. Some enter the ABE program with unattainable expectations but after a semester, those who remain have acquired more realistic expectations. In Ash, Beech, and Hickory Cities, an 8th grade certificate is a goal but few attain it, even those who go on for the high school equivalency.

Encouragement

The decision to participate is not made easily and often needs encouragement. Failing a job related test sometimes provides this encouragement. If the encouragement is not provided, and the target population is not attracted, they cannot be taught. Furthermore, there tends to be the concern that if the enrollment is down, there will be a reduction in anticipated program funds. This problem is compounded by a dropout rate which is reported to be about 50 per cent, and which seems

to be highest for those with the lowest educational level. There is little substantial evidence regarding attrition.

Agency Effort

The extent of the recruitment problem depends on the difficulty in encouraging persons in the target population to enroll and the fit between the program and the participant's expectations. This fit is reflected in the persistence and retention rate. The reaction to a shift in the enrollment rate in combination with the retention rate depends on the extent to which there are available places rather than a waiting list. A ceiling on funds and a long waiting list tend to result in a low priority for recruitment and for efforts to reduce the dropout rate. Much depends on how the ABE administrator views the recruitment problem.

In cities in which income to the ABE unit is related to enrollment, there is greater effort to increase enrollment than in cities where a fixed budget means that recruitment only produces overcrowding of classes. For instance, when the budget is related to enrollment, it is more likely that one or two classes will be located in outlying centers in neighborhoods, a more expensive arrangement but one that tends to boost enrollment.

Approach

One major recruitment task is the specification of priorities regarding the characteristics of the target population to be reached. One way to do so is to decide on segments of the target population to be more actively recruited, using such criteria as age; sex; race; educational level; and occupational, family or welfare status. The definition of the size and characteristics of the target population provides a basis for

the selection of methods that are likely to reach them. This is the process referred to earlier as attempting to reach the poorest. Another approach is to use inexpensive, middle class methods of recruitment (such as mass media and contacting organizations) and then accepting whoever shows up as the clientele. This approach is likely to attract those illiterate adults who are most likely to acquire an 8th grade education or more. Either way a basic recruitment decision has been made. The director of one program indicated that there was no need to actively recruit participants because the reputation of the ABE program was sufficiently good that word-of-mouth resulted in all the participants that they had funds for. A small part of the target population in Oak City consisted of people above the poverty line who wanted to become more literate for business reasons. If the target population is the really hard core of unemployed and almost totally illiterate adults, then a highly selective approach must be made. Some programs, such as those in Ash and Oak cities, indicated that typical ABE programs could not reach the hard core; that stipends, work related components, and social service components were needed. In Ash, Hickory and Walnut cities, door-to-door recruiters were tried, with very little success. As the size and characteristics of the target population in the community shifts, this should be reflected in the new enrollees in the ABE program. One vehicle for recruitment is relating literacy to vocational education. At the demonstration center in Hickory City, almost three-quarters are interested in jobs.

Channels

There are a variety of channels through which messages about the ABE

program might be communicated to a target population. The characteristics of the target population provide a major determinant of which combination of channels will be most successful. The channels through which potential participants might receive information about ABE include print and electronic mass media, conversation with an ABE participant, conversation with an opinion leader in their circle of friends, conversation with an ABE staff person such as a recruiter or a counsellor, participation in a vestibule program that "feeds" into the ABE program, and membership in a community group that co-sponsors an ABE course. Families, friends and co-workers seem to be the most common source of information. The use of a "feeder" class is a promising innovation. In Beech City, ABE administrators indicated that informal word-of-mouth by satisfied participants was the most effective method of recruitment. Also mentioned as methods were the efforts of teachers who wanted to establish and maintain a class with sufficient enrollment, organized efforts by present students, T.V. spot announcements, and working through organizations such as the PTA, CAP agencies, and welfare. In Walnut City, much promotional effort was reported, including work with the churches, leaflets distributed by teachers, and tapes prepared for use by an ethnic radio station. Maple City also used radio tapes and worked with churches. In Oak City, a former newspaper man was hired by the school system, with part of his time assigned to publicizing the ABE program. An ABE administrator there also urged greater use of employers as allies in recruitment. The community image of the ABE program as practical and adult-oriented will facilitate recruitment. The ABE unit staff can help to attract participants through informal contact with persons in the target population, or through more formal recruitment through

organizations or by going door-to-door. Most of the programs have discontinued door-to-door recruiting as ineffective. The ABE participants may organize clubs for other illiterates to encourage them to enroll. In Maple City, it is stressed to all ABE students that they have a stake in recruitment so that at least a minimum class size can be maintained and their class continue. Partly as a result, many ABE students on their own organized clubs to recruit their friends and neighbors into ABE classes. Government departments, such as neighborhood services and police, can provide suggestions of people in each neighborhood who are likely to be opinion leaders who could encourage illiterate adults to enroll. Ministers whose congregations include a substantial number of illiterate adults can talk convincingly about the value of ABE classes, and will be more likely to do so if someone from the ABE unit will help prepare the talk. Except in instances where ABE participants do not want others to know about it, photographs of ABE groups posted in their neighborhood can encourage enrollment by their acquaintances. Even though referrals from welfare and employment agencies have not been a very effective source of participants, the process can be helped by ABE staff contact. The availability of a stipend, even transportation money, can encourage participation of the poorest. In one ABE program related to the Welfare Education Plan, participants received a ten dollar a week stipend plus an allowance or child care facilities for baby sitting.

This important aspect of an ABE program can be better understood by describing the way in which the staff of the unit analyze and make adjustments in the ways in which the unit establishes linkage with

individuals and groups in the target population. For instance, in Maple City some of the ABE staff concluded that some illiterate adults reject the setting in which their early schooling occurred. They therefore tried to establish alternative settings for ABE classes. One was churches. One of the ABE program administrators meets regularly with the Ministerial Alliance. He found that some ministers who are in the process of setting up a storefront church in a poor neighborhood would like to schedule an ABE class on the same evening as the service in hopes that each activity would attract some participants for the other. He found, however, that some ministers resist cooperation with the ABE program because of concern for divided loyalties and a lessening of his authority. The program administrator tried to counteract this concern by showing some of the advantages including attraction of ambitious young adults.

One of the most promising ways to encourage participation is co-sponsorship or other ways to encourage various organizations and groups to provide referrals to the ABE program. In a few programs this channel is becoming the major source of participants. It is in some respects surprising that the extent of co-sponsorship of ABE classes is so infrequent.

FACILITIES

Locations

An ABE program takes place somewhere. It may occur in school, in a church basement or a union hall, or in someone's living room. Most ABE classes are held in school facilities, but an increasing proportion are being held in other facilities. In Maple City, about 40 per cent of the ABE classes in one program were held in school facilities, with the

remainder about equally divided between churches and other locations such as union facilities. In Beech City, one of the ABE programs had no more than two classes in any location that included schools, churches, storefronts, libraries, and housing developments. Non-school facilities may be closer, more familiar, and less threatening to the target population and more accessible during the day. However, there may be problems related to health, safety and instructional equipment. Some states have minimum standards that must be met if facilities are to be used for educational purposes by more than a set number of persons. Non-school facilities also tend to be more expensive to operate. In Ash City, state standards require that if non-school facilities are used for 9 or more persons the classroom must have at least two doors, there must be separate men's and women's rooms, etc. Many non-school locations for ABE classes do not meet these requirements. As a result of these types of decisions, each ABE unit decides on the proportion of classes that will be held in non-school locations and the criteria for selecting these facilities. One criterion may be the willingness of a co-sponsoring group to provide the facilities without charge. In Hickory City, an ABE class could easily be placed in a school building that was already open that evening for other adult classes, but otherwise opening a school was difficult and expensive.

Timing

An ABE program occurs at some time. The exclusive use of school facilities tends to severely restrict day classes, unless one or more adult day schools are provided. Although some programs reported adult day school facilities, many indicated that they confronted problems in

arranging for space for day classes. The WEP-related ABE program in Beech City that was originally day only, later added evening classes. Some segments of the target population require day classes, such as older adults, mothers of school age children, and evening shift workers. Facilities primarily for the ABE program contribute to institutionalization. This occurs because facilities provide visibility and the appearance of stability and continuity, because they tend to increase the number of persons related to the school system who include relationships with the ABE program as part of their routine, because facilities tend to be associated with a long-term financial commitment, and because keeping facilities utilized becomes a way of assuring continued use of facilities. In general, about ninety per cent of the Title III ABE classes were held in the evenings. There is a tendency for Spanish-speaking adults to be less interested in evening classes.

Centralization

Another consideration related to facilities, but also to programming, is whether the ABE classes are centralized in a few locations or decentralized with just one or two classes at most locations. Decentralization minimizes the time and expense of transportation for participants. It can also place classes closer to convenient transportation routes and work locations. However, small enrollments tend to increase the costs of the ABE program per participant. Centralization increases the possibility of specialization of class objectives and supporting services such as counseling, loan materials, and audio-visual aids. In several cities, materials were far less available at decentralized locations. At centralized locations with two or more classes

running concurrently, classes can be operated at different reading levels, or with specialized emphasis such as ESL.

Deciding on Facilities

Because the ABE unit tends to have very little floor space under its control, and that usually office space, the decision-making process related to facilities is largely a matter of the ABE unit administrator's negotiating with those who do control the desired space for its part-time use by the ABE program. These "others" in the schools may be in the adult education division, in the school business office, the principal of each school building, an assistant superintendent of schools or, in decentralized systems, a district superintendent. In Ash City, during the late afternoon and evening, one person has the responsibility to allocate all school facilities for adult education and other uses.

These "others" outside the schools are typically administrators of the community groups that have available facilities. In the latter instances someone in the schools or in state government may participate in the decision. The co-sponsoring group may contribute meeting space in return for the benefits of having the ABE program available for the membership, or it may want to rent the space to the schools as a way of helping the schools with "the schools'" program. In all of these decisions, one basic consideration is, what contribution will any given arrangement make to the achievement of program objectives? In addition to basic instructional requirements, and minimal health and safety standards, the facilities should encourage the participants to feel at ease. Aside from general requirements, there are some that vary with the instructional approach and attitudes of the target population. For

instance, tutoring centers require different facilities than classrooms for group instruction. Some illiterate adults may be more attracted to the prestige of a high school location than an elementary school, and some may be annoyed by smoking restrictions. The ABE administrator in Walnut City discovered that the best days, times, and locations varied substantially from neighborhood to neighborhood within their service area. Another consideration was the length of the term for each course, and the number of class sessions per week. They scheduled some evening classes to meet four times a week and some day classes to meet five times a week to facilitate rapid progress for persons who could spend this much time weekly.

FINANCES

Sources

Because ABE programs do not charge fees to the participants, the amount of tax funds from all sources for ABE in a city is the primary determinant of the size of the ABE program. For many adult education programs that charge tuition to the participants, this is not the case. For these programs, as the enrollment increases or decreases, so does the budget. With the ABE funds allocated annually, if the budget allows one hundred teachers, then the fluctuation in enrollment tends to be in class size until all classes are filled to capacity. When tax funds are increased or decreased a new ceiling is established. The size of the ABE budget is relevant to both the size of the community and of the target population.

The process by which Federal ABE funds under Title III of ESEA are allocated to an individual city for ongoing ABE programs is relatively complicated and varies somewhat from state to state. The total amount for

distribution to states depends on the amount provided in the federal appropriations bill. Because the appropriations bill is usually enacted during the year during which expenditures are to occur, a continuing resolution at the start of the fiscal year provides for expenditures at the same monthly rate as for the previous year until the appropriations bill is passed and establishes a new level of expenditures. If the appropriations for a program are cut substantially, the result could be that the annual federal share is entirely expended part way through the year when the total federal allocation becomes known. The allocations to the states are based primarily on population but with a basic allotment to less populous states. The federal administration of the ABE program is based on a state plan that is submitted or amended each year by each state. Part of the federal funds are used for administration of the ABE program at the state level. The state ABE director and his staff have responsibility for the preparation and administration of the state plan including the allocation of ABE funds to local school districts. The procedure by which the state plan is formulated and local allocations made varies somewhat from state to state. One major factor is the number of adults with less than a 8th grade education, the size of the target population. In some states the local share of the state allocation is relatively predictable and routine from year to year. In other states, the local school district must make a case for requested funds. Many states have some ABE funds that they can reallocate to some school districts, towards the end of the fiscal year. One factor that in some states influences the size of the initial local allocation and especially the year-end allocation of ABE funds, is

the reported number of adults who registered for or attended the ABE program. For two equivalent communities, the one that reports the larger enrollment will typically receive a larger state allocation of federal ABE funds under Title III. This factor is related to attendance reporting practices at the class, center, and district levels, even though the federal funds are not reimbursement based on enrollment or average daily attendance. The reporting of enrollments from the state to the federal levels does serve to present evidence to encourage Congress to appropriate the same or a larger amount of funds for ABE. For cities without state aid for adult education or a local contribution other than the minimum "in-kind" matching, the federal share of the local ABE program approaches ninety per cent. For cities that receive state aid and a local contribution, the federal share is about fifty per cent.

In addition to the federal government as the major current source of ABE funds, some states allocate money for ABE. The local community contribution tends to be "in kind" and hidden instead of a cash allocation. When there is no charge to the ABE budget for use of facilities, equipment, and the services of support staff, this hidden local contribution can be substantial. Additional sources of funds for ABE include contributions of money, facilities, or services by co-sponsors, contributions by community groups, and project grants from foundations or government.

Transformation

The collection of money from a few sources and its expenditure for standard purposes such as staff salaries and materials results in less complex financial procedures than for some adult education programs in which fees are collected from participants as well. However, the ABE

financial cycle is still very complicated and long delays are standard. The participation by federal and state government, city schools and city government, and co-sponsoring groups in addition to the ABE unit requires the coordination of different financial procedures. The time required to process an invoice for payment can be upwards to three months. The ABE administrators in some cities have worked out arrangements to simplify procedures. The problem is made worse by the standard practice by the federal government of making the allocation of funds well into the fiscal year in which they are to be spent. The allocation of local funds as a cushion can minimize the most troublesome results of this practice. For instance, in Ash City the local school district allocates \$20,000 that minimizes the problems related to fluctuations in funding. For the largest ABE programs in the country, this type of local cushion may be less workable.

The relation between local and federal funds is affected by the way in which the local community reacted to the initial availability of federal ABE funds. Some communities used them to extend an existing program and others used them to establish a new and parallel ABE program aimed at the native-born illiterate. Communities that responded in the latter way tend to lack a substantial local tax fund contribution to their federal ABE program because the separate local ABE programs compete for these funds. For instance, in Beech City, the major portion of local tax funds have continued to support the earlier separate ABE program with an Americanization emphasis, and the federally funded ABE programs have been restricted to the level of federal allocations along with the local matching. The ABE office in the state education department can influence the financial arrangements in ways beyond the transmission of

federal funds to the local community and the processing of reports. One way is by the administration of state aid for local ABE programs. For cities that receive state aid, such as Maple City, Oak City, and Walnut City, the state share of the total is about half and the proportion has been increasing. Another is by the provision of special grants similar to the Federal 309 ABE demonstration and training grants. Typically the ABE unit administrator handles most of the financial transactions at the unit level, by working closely with the school business office. The effectiveness of the ABE financial procedure depends, in addition to the soundness of the school system's financial practices and the competence of the ABE administrator, on the extent to which appropriate authority and responsibility is delegated to the ABE administrator and on the extent to which different procedures are established for the ABE unit as needed. For example, it was the opinion of a state ABE staff member that the hourly rate for ABE teachers was sufficiently close to the rate for full-time day teachers that the ABE program in Ash City could arrange for some full-time ABE teachers. The ABE unit administrator works closely with at least one person in the business or finance office of the school system in the submission of the official ABE budget for approval.

Another finance-related characteristic of the ABE unit is the extent to which the allocation of funds from any source includes specification of the purposes for which they are to be spent. For instance, some allocations assume that at least a given number of persons will be reached almost regardless of how much they learn, while others emphasize individual progress with slight emphasis on the number reached. One of the Maple City ABE programs tended to emphasize reaching as many persons as possible

with the available funds. In Oak City, the cost per participant per year was more than twice that for the adult high school program. The budgeting procedures do not provide additional funds for the ABE program if the class sizes are larger. This reduces the incentive to operate large classes, although the total enrollment does affect state aid to the total school system. In Ash City, a state ABE administrator urged that a more effective and expensive program be provided for fewer participants. Most ABE programs appear to operate on the assumption that the most desirable cost benefit ratio is computed on the basis of the maximum number of persons who can readily be helped. A "disaster analogy" is sometimes used to indicate that with limited resources, funds should be used to assist as many as possible of those who can make the most progress. In Maple City, the cost per pupil hour for the ABE program was about 54 cents, and was somewhat higher for classes in rental space in non-school facilities.

One of the powerful factors in the allocation of resources is the extent of community involvement and support. This support can be reflected in its influence on decisions regarding ABE allocations at the local, state and federal level. It can also be reflected in underwriting of non-school locations that tend to be more expensive than school locations. A complicating factor is the interest by some community groups in obtaining directly for their own use funds intended for ABE programs. In their belief that if school sponsored ABE programs fail these funds will be available to non-school groups, some groups not only withhold support for current ABE programs but sometimes work against their success.

An examination of the process of budget making and budget administering can reveal much about the functioning of the ABE unit. In

studying this process it is important to look beyond the financial procedures and who participates, to the programmatic implications of alternative courses of action at key decision points at which alternatives are selected.

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

Process

Program development is the planning process by which it is decided how the participants should change as a result of the program, what types of learning experiences they should engage in to do so, and how effective various program components are in relation to results. This process occurs at the level of the individual class group and at some points through unit-wide activities. The participants in the program development process include mentors, program administrators, learners, and others such as support staff and representatives of community groups. In some instances there is a separate curriculum staff. In Beech City, the ABE curriculum specialists work with committees of ABE teachers in the development of guides and materials including films. Even when there is no conscious and organized process, it is occurring because decisions regarding objectives, learning experiences, and evaluation are being made, if only by default.

Objectives

Decisions regarding objectives tend to be made implicitly as emphases are decided upon regarding the competencies that the learners should acquire from the program and regarding the proportions of time to be devoted to reading, to writing, to arithmetic, and to various content

areas such as urban living and specifically consumer education. These objectives tend to evolve over time, but are sometimes formalized in staff discussions or in a written statement. Formal statements of objectives can be helpfully stated in phases that indicate the sequence in which they should be emphasized. Statements of objectives reflect state guidelines and agency goals. Some attention should be given to objectives related to ways in which the learner is expected to follow through after the ABE program and apply what is learned in his roles as family member, worker, and organization member. This includes the ease of transition to adult high school programs or the high school equivalency program. In Maple City, one teacher who emphasized objectives related to application, utilized actual materials related to driver education and income taxes.

Learning Activities

Decisions regarding the selection and organization of learning experiences tend to be made mainly by the individual teacher because they are so closely connected to teaching style. A wide range of instructional methods and techniques are available to the ABE teacher. In practice each teacher uses only a few but has the ability to use many. Why? Part of the answer is familiarity, part is appropriateness for the specific learners, part is the amount of planning and preparation that is required. There is a tendency to use methods and techniques that are easy to plan and easy to use. One convenient and familiar source, that is often not appropriate for adults, is the preparatory education program in which most of the teachers teach during the day. It is also at this point that many of the technical aspects of the teaching of reading are pertinent, such as the relative emphasis on work recognition and phonetic

attack, or between reading comprehension, speed, and flexibility.

One dimension of learning experience is the provision that is made for individualization. To what extent do learners with very different backgrounds and objectives engage in a different set of learning activities? In analyzing the learning activities aspect of program development, it is important to examine especially the roles of mentor, learner and supervisor. To what extent is the learner involved in planning? What range of alternatives are considered by the teacher and how is a specific course of action selected? What role does the supervisor play in helping to expand the mentor's repertoire, in encouraging teachers to team up so as to complement each other's competences, and in exploring the appropriateness of various learning experiences for learners with various characteristics? Most ABE classes are almost exclusively under the control of the teacher. In Ash City, there is no set curriculum; each teacher is expected to adapt and individualize as he sees fit. In Beech City, the curricular plan is established by the teacher with the assistance of the teacher-in-charge. In Walnut City, and in some centers in Hickory City, the administrator works with the teachers in establishing a general outline for the ABE curriculum within which the individual teacher has great latitude. In some cities the ABE staff has expressed the belief that to reach and teach the hard core illiterate will require a combination of ABE and social service to help the adult solve some of the crushing problems that hinder efforts to raise the level of literacy and that produce erratic class attendance. There are several likely components of such an alternative approach to the ABE hard core. Included are the use of methods that are part of community development, individualization of instruction, interrelating the

ABE program and relevant social service programs, and close working relationship among ABE teachers to articulate parts of the ABE program. For the Spanish speaking who are illiterate in all languages it may also include the development of Spanish literacy before English literacy.

Evaluation

Decisions regarding evaluation tend to be made least consciously of all. There is a tendency to use statements of satisfaction and the dropout rate as primary indicators of effectiveness. However, few ABE programs collect and utilize evaluation data in an organized way for program improvement. Participant mobility makes participant follow-up difficult. Also, limited program funds and administrative time inhibits more sophisticated evaluation procedures. The function of continuous program evaluation is to assist people associated with the ABE program to make judgments about program effectiveness based on evidence in a way that enables the conclusions to be used for program improvement. Regardless of whether formal evaluation occurs, judgments will be made. Evaluation procedures can focus on diagnosis, such as a screening procedure as participants enter a program, and on assessing progress. One standard way of assessing progress toward the end of the ABE program is an 8th grade equivalency exam. In Ash City, the ABE staff developed and used an 8th grade equivalency exam with which they were quite pleased. In Walnut City, there was growing dissatisfaction with the standardized achievement test that was being used, and staff had identified one that was considered better. These procedures can be oral as well as written, especially in an ABE program.

Evaluation procedures can also be used to assess the relative effectiveness of alternative resources or approaches in relation to results. However, the crucial criterion of effective evaluation is, does it lead to program improvement? For instance, in several centers, including one in Walnut City, an interview and a placement test were being used to diagnose new participants at the point of intake and to prescribe a plan of placement and study. The procedures allow the staff to decide on effectiveness of the initial steps and to modify them in an effort to achieve greater effectiveness.

CONCLUSION

The foregoing model contains the basic ingredients of the adult basic education (ABE) organizational unit of the urban public schools in the United States. It does not contain a detailed description of the teaching-learning transaction.

The ABE unit interacts with organizations outside the local community, such as federal and state government, institutions of higher education, professional associations, and other ABE programs. This interchange is related both to official relationships such as funding and reporting, and to informal relationships such as the interchange of ideas, materials, and personnel. The ABE unit also interacts with various segments in the local community. Part of this interaction is reflected in the public image of the unit. A crucial segment of the community is the target population of functionally illiterate adults. The size and characteristics of this target population establish some of the basic conditions against which the performance of the ABE unit is directed and evaluated. Co-sponsorship of ABE classes by organizations such as churches or unions

with which members of the target population may be associated is an effective although little utilized practice to encourage initial and continued participation. Other organizations, such as those related to employment, housing, welfare, and health, can also be a source of referrals of participants. Other ABE programs, such as those sponsored by WIN, WEP, and MDTA, typically provide similar programs for similar participants, but because the size of the target population is so many times larger than the number being reached, the competition is not necessarily undesirable.

The ABE administrator typically reports to the director of adult education, and because he and perhaps a few supervisors are the only full-time staff associated with the ABE program, they tend to be the "cement" that holds the program together. Most of the ABE teachers teach adults part-time along with full-time teaching positions in the "day" program for children. Primary reliance on federal funding has produced even greater independence for the ABE program, compared with locally financed adult education programs, but separate financing has often served to separate the several ABE programs. To a greater extent than for most organizations, the ABE program depends on constantly negotiated and reinforced informal arrangements to acquire resources such as teachers, classrooms, equipment, and materials that in most organizations are provided routinely because of policy decisions. A major issue in the near future is the extent and type of institutionalization of the ABE unit that occurs. Too little may threaten its continuance. Too much may undermine its flexibility and responsiveness. The demonstration projects have tended to be very similar to the remainder of the ABE program, except much more expensive. A major issue

is the most useful role of the demonstration project.

The newness and marginality of the ABE unit contribute to lack of formalization of goals. Although the individual teacher can most readily influence program goals, others associated with the program can also exert substantial influence if they have the conviction to do so. An unresolved policy issue is the extent of emphasis that the ABE program should place on reaching the poorest adults in contrast with maximizing service. Although there is talk of the former, most programs do the latter. A little tried alternative is a carefully organized combination of the two approaches.

The ABE administrators tend to be middle-aged, action oriented, men with school teaching and administration backgrounds. As the programs become larger and more established, some differentiation of administrative function is occurring. The recruitment of ABE administrators is typically informal and based on prior contact within the school system. The administrative positions tend to be attractive ways to "moonlight" because of the work with adults, visibility for promotion, opportunity to pioneer, helping to solve social problems, and satisfactions of being an administrator. Most of the administrator's time is spent on solving the most urgent problems related to staffing, facilities, materials, finance, and community relations, so that the ABE unit will continue to function. Staff supervision (including recruitment, placement, and professional development) is a major responsibility, and in larger ABE units assistance is provided by teachers in charge. The annual turnover of administrators has been small.

Mentors tend to be in their early thirties, to teach children full time during the day, and to teach ABE classes two or three

sessions a week. Teaching positions are sufficiently attractive so that there are typically more applicants than positions. Incentives include the money, working with adults, lack of discipline problems, motivated learners, and autonomy. Effective teaching of ABE classes requires substantial competence related to both subject matter teaching and relating well to the learners. Although a variety of competencies are referred to as desirable, in practice most ABE teachers are elementary school teachers. Some use is made of paraprofessionals. In-service education is very limited. The ABE teachers tend to function only individually and not collectively as a faculty.

One aspect of the instructional process is the counseling and guidance function. Some ABE teachers include this function within their role and there is typically a small amount of specialized counselor and staff time available to assist teachers and to test and counsel participants. It would seem effective to have the teacher focus on educational and personal counseling, and to have the specialized counseling staff focus on vocational counseling and referrals.

Both commercial and teacher-made materials are used in ABE classes. Little review, selection, and evaluation of materials occurs. Of special value are materials, on an appropriate reading level that deal with activities of adulthood, such as tax forms or drivers' manuals.

Adults participate for many reasons, but the decision is often difficult and needs encouragement. The extent of agency recruitment effort is related to the extent to which greater enrollment will benefit the agency through an increased budget, or cause problems of overcrowding. In general, a wide variety of ways are used to attract participants,

but each program uses only some of the ways. Word of mouth from current participants is seen by many ABE administrators as the most widespread and effective way. Vestibule programs, co-sponsorship, and participant clubs are effective ways that are little used.

Classes can be held in school or in non-school facilities, and each type of location has a different set of advantages and disadvantages. Facilities that are primarily for the use of ABE contribute to institutionalization. Most classes are held in school facilities in the evening, but there is a trend toward day classes and classes in non-school facilities. Centralization of classes at a few locations and decentralization so that only one or two classes are held at each location, each have some advantages and disadvantages. The process of deciding on facilities is complex and depends heavily on informal arrangements with other people.

Almost all ABE funds are allocated annually from tax funds with the major part from the federal government. In some cities the local share from city or state sources is expanding. The annual allocation serves to place a ceiling on the number of participants that year, because the allocation does not fluctuate with enrollment. Typically, the ABE administrator handles most of the financial transactions at the unit level by working closely with the school business office.

Program development is the process of planning and implementing the selection of objectives, the organization of learning activities, and evaluation. Objectives are influenced by state and local guidelines, but the major influence is the inclinations of each teacher and the participants with whom he interacts. The major influence on the selection and organization of learning activities is the teacher and a major issue is the extent of individualization that is provided.

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The evaluation procedures tend to be limited, with placement testing, periodic achievement testing, and the 8th grade equivalency exam as the typical ways.

The foregoing components in this model interact and in so doing the system functions. In general, the major responsibility of the ABE administrator is to keep the system functioning.

III. CLASSROOM INTERACTION: RULES OF THE GAME

The Loner's Game

A range of diversity of students probably unprecedented in American education is the most significant distinguishing characteristic of ABE classes. The policy of free open enrollment to all over the age of 16 with less than an eighth grade education has brought together an astonishing potpourri of ethnic backgrounds, educational achievement (from total illiterates in any language to Ph.D.'s with limited English mastery), ages (adolescence to senility), generation of citizenship (first, second, third, etc.), middle to lower, lower socio-economic classes, native ability from clearly retarded to exceptionally bright and a psychiatric range from quite disturbed to normal. Although distributed unequally among classes, a principal educational consequence of this marked diversity is that students are unlikely to form true groups, share experiences and, in doing so, teach each other, unless some mechanism is artificially introduced into the program to make this possible. It seldom is in practice.

The resulting attenuation of the process of general socialization in ABE classes is firmly established, especially in school settings. Hence the most potent educational force for acculturation to evolve shared values and induce attitude change does not pertain. Students, by and large, come individually, leave individually and largely fail to socialize even during class breaks. Most "know" each other mainly on the level of recognition alone. They say,

You know, it is very hard to get formally introduced around here at all. You know a lot of teachers, but as far as students, sometimes you never find out their first names.

In answer to the query, "Do you talk to others after class or during breaks or do they help you with your homework?" the answer is, "No, I just leave. I think it is very individualized, at least that is the way I feel."

Such grouping or pairing that does go on within and outside the classroom is commonly by ethnic groups, sex, age, country of origin, prior association in the relatively few cases where this exists (as in co-sponsored classes held in neighborhood churches) and, occasionally, level of ability (e.g., mentally retarded students were reported to socialize out of class.) There is wide variation among students in the meaning of the school and of the learning experience.

The teacher, always pressured to maintain enrollment and to "reach" those among the educationally deprived who need help most, must accept everyone. And keep them. ABE students are under heavy competing pressures which make an extended commitment to the educational program particularly tenuous. Unstable jobs, fatigue, family responsibilities, residential mobility, the need to supplement principal sources of income, involvement with public agencies all are countervailing pressures. They reinforce a natural reluctance to admit educational inadequacies and again confront the possibility of failure.

One of the problems inherent in "bringing the classroom to the learner" is that frequently only one or a few classes are located in any one place. This means that students at every level of academic achievement up to eighth grade must be accommodated in the same class. When

the demand is sufficient to warrant several classes in a convenient geographical area or in one site, ABE classes are generally divided into three levels of instruction. Basic Education classes include grade levels 1-3, 4-6, or 7-8; ESL classes usually are designated "Beginning," "Intermediate" and "Advanced." Some large adult day schools further differentiate levels and classes by elementary school subject designations.

For ABE teachers, confronted with this extraordinary diversity and highly tentative student commitment, a distinctive set of rules of the game has emerged.

RULE I: ATTENDANCE = BREAD

No lietmotif is more consistantly haunting than the emphasis placed by ABE teachers on attendance--recording it and reporting it. They are made to feel, with justification, that this is the criterion of administrative judgment: their success in attracting and particularly holding students. The pressure derives from the numbers game played by the Office of Education in justifying Congressional expenditures and by state officials who add or subtract local allocations according to where funds can "best" be used. In states which apply an average daily attendance formula to adult classes as the basis for state aid, pressure on the teacher is further intensified. ABE directors are comforted by a mythical 50 per cent dropout rate which has been established by conventional wisdom.

Consequently, great care is taken with the mechanics of recording attendance. Aides are given this as a priority task of classroom management. Teachers commonly check several times during each class period to determine whether late arrivals have been recorded and whether attendance is off from the last meeting.

A consistant effort is made to ascertain the reasons for absences. Teachers not uncommonly telephone and otherwise attempt to contact absentees to find out why they are out and when they will return to class. They query other students and ask them to contact those who are out. Teachers greet students returning after missing a class by asking, "Were you sick?" and make a point of explaining excused absences to their class: "Judy had trouble getting accross town."

Teachers take umbrage: "He took a hike on me."

Mrs. C. seems to make frequent "subtle" digs to her students to indicate disapproval. For example, she commented to two or three students who had missed some of the previous classes, 'You were absent, so it will probably be harder for you to get this,' or 'You will probably have difficulty with the definitions since you missed some of the classes in which we talked about this material.' It almost seems as if she considers it a personal affront if they are not attentive or regular in attendance.

They threaten:

Mrs. C. asked some of the students if they had seen George, and whether or not he was at school today. The students indicated that he was in school and had signed the roll in Mr. G's class, but that he was in the gym or somewhere. Mrs. C. remarked, 'He acts just like a spoiled child!' She then commented that she, or someone else, would get rid of him if this behavior continued.

And plead:

He asked the students not to let him down by not showing up to class as had been done to him one time. The time to which he referred was last quarter. He had told the students that the excercise was going to be held on that coming Thursday, and absolutely no one showed up. He went around the class and asked for a commitment from each of the students to be there on Thursday for the excercise. Most gave the commitment. Several, however, laughed, somewhat embarrassed, and said nothing. These few he tried to convince, laughingly, that there was nothing to worry about.

And falsify the records. Probably infrequent, this derivation of the early American political practice of winning elections with the tombstone vote is not unknown, especially in scattered and poorly supervised classes. A variation: "If a student scores beyond the eighth grade on this test, we falsify the records."

The problem of attendance maintenance is unequally distributed. It is more acute in basic education classes than in ESL where the student body is more homogeneous, the payoff more clearly seen, the problem more obviously resolved by specific remediation and less stigma attached to returning to school. It is more difficult in beginning and lower level classes when students give it a try and opt out. In some programs it may be toughest with younger students in basic education classes, the unemployed high school dropouts who are more likely to attend daytime classes. Those hardest to reach, the so-called "hard core" chronically unemployed, rarely get into public school ABE classrooms except, perhaps, through the so-called "Special Projects," funded independently by USOE as demonstrations. There have been infrequent cases of their involvement through co-sponsorship with local anti-poverty type community organizations.

Pressure on a particular teacher may be eased by a large initial enrollment in her class so that attrition is less threatening, a high referral rate by community agencies to take up the slack of drop outs or a deliberate policy by the administration to continue certain classes with lower than established minimum enrollment--such as those in high priority neighborhoods or involving hard to reach students.

Class location and scheduling, transportation costs and distances, the threat of being criminally accosted at night in inner city locations

and lack of child care facilities are major contextual factors limiting enrollment and sustained attendance. As one teacher reported,

Once a student gets robbed or attacked coming home from a class, they may never come back. They won't come alone for this reason, and they always try to come in groups. At 10:00 at night robberies are quite frequent in these neighborhoods. If they can't find a group, they won't come to class, and thus you will have, in a sense, group absenteeism.

RULE II: CLASSROOM RULES AND CONVENTIONS: HANG LOOSE

A distinguishing aspect of ABE is the conspicuous relaxation of customary rules, rituals and conventions governing classroom conduct and management. Instruction begins when the teacher arrives and continues until his departure two or three hours later except for a fifteen minute break half way through the period. However, students may and do arrive casually over the first half of the period and occasionally later, tend to come and go according to their own personal requirements throughout the period and leave when they are ready anytime during the latter half of the class meeting.

Students may or may not request permission to leave the room but are rarely constrained from doing as they wish. There is little ritual that begins or ends a class. Some teachers minimize the disruptive influence of late arrivals by giving an initial assignment on the blackboard upon which students can work individually as they arrive. No grades are given, and students may or may not do the homework assigned.

Although most classes are businesslike with students seriously trying to learn, commonly there are some students who sleep, chat, read magazines, daydream, flirt or wander about with minimum interference by the teacher. Such behavior is more frequently encountered in daytime

classes which have a larger proportion of younger students, particularly high school drop outs, mentally retarded adults and others seeking to "pass the time" and socialize. The great majority of day students are unemployed; evening students have jobs.

As the aide made her rounds with the other half of the class, she came to the sleeping Velma. With a gentle pat on her 'natural,' she woke Velma up. After a few words, she let the girl go back to sleep and went on to the others.

One of the girls. . . spent most of the period walking around and in and out of the class; she would also go up to others and with a cheery greeting and a pat on the back encourage them to keep working as she made the rounds. Toward the end of the class, she told Mrs. C. how tired she was. The terse reply was that it was no wonder seeing how much walking she did.

Nor are there rules other than general social expectations governing deportment, dress, grooming, interpersonal manners, classroom posture, etc. In effect, there is no apparent tampering with individual behavior systems of a general order. Failure to meet expectations is not, by and large, brought to student or class attention except when it leads quite obviously to disturbance in the classroom. Even here the level of tolerance is wide.

There came the euphonic sounds of a large radio filtering through the classroom from outside in the hall. Three young black adults hovered around the back entrance of the classroom, one of them carrying the blaring radio. The entire class turned around and the exercise ceased. They conversed for awhile and then one of the three fellows gave each of the other two

'five' (slapped their hand) and literally bopped into the classroom. He was about one hour late. The exercise continued and Mrs. C. said nothing. After a short spell the student who had just come in rose and went to the front of the classroom and signed his name on the class sign-in sheet. He then resumed his seat. Mrs. C. still said nothing.

This highly relaxed classroom atmosphere - and most are pleasant, friendly and informal - is functional for the group to be served and dictated by the tyranny of maintaining attendance. ABE students have varied conceptions of time and punctuality, are easily slighted, have not generally learned to be learners, are sometimes without the energy to attend to an instructional situation or even stay awake in a sitting position for extended periods after a hard day's work. Some come to socialize and have little time for it before or after class. Others are looking for boy or girl friends. A few, more commonly in daytime classes, are likely to be disturbed or retarded and require a custodial relationship with the teacher.

As I commented on the large number of students who appeared retarded in the class, Mrs. C. expressed a certain reluctance to label them as such, but admitted that they probably fell into this category. She then said, 'After you've been here awhile, you get to know who needs it. Some can spend years and . . . ' (shaking her head).

The student said 'O.K.' but did not follow through, and no more was said. Mr. B. commented later that this student is 'mentally disturbed' in some way and can become very angry with little provocation. He stated that he was somewhat afraid of him and does not want to push him to do anything for fear of what the student's reaction will be.

In most classes there will be a core group of serious and motivated

learners. Observers note that ABE students fall into three easily delineated groups: learners, attenders and occasional attenders. By law, administrative policy and often teacher conviction, all are welcome. Although instruction is recognized as paramount, it is a common and egregious error to equate the necessary functions of an ABE classroom with instruction alone. Some co-sponsored classes, like those given during the daytime in a local church, may be highly social with students composed of an established group of middle aged ladies with coffee and cake served "party" style. Distinctions must be made between ESL and basic education classes, beginning and advanced classes, daytime and evening classes. In some cases the effectiveness of instruction will be a direct function of how well custodial, socialization, 'park bench' or social service functions are carried out.

To further complicate the picture, the open enrollment policy of ABE has been interpreted to mean that students can begin work anytime during the semester or quarter a class is meeting - usually with little or no prior screening. "Availability is the name of the game" is a familiar cliché. In extreme cases teachers have experienced a complete change in student body during the same semester. Students resent the intrusion of late starters and absentees who make it necessary for the class to review and sometimes start again from the beginning for their benefit. In adult day school there is increased opportunity for mobility among classes, and students are referred into regular ABE classes for some portion of the course, such as mathematics.

Mr. S. mentioned that of the original students enrolled at the beginning of the semester, only four had remained in the class. Four others had transferred...to a typing class which

was just starting that day (almost at the end of the semester). Several other students (three or four) had decided that they did not want to take classes in the afternoon, so that they had dropped the reading class.

The ideology of bringing the classroom to the learner has resulted in classes being held in a variety of settings. The most frequent arrangement is the evening use of an elementary school room. Chairs and desks are too small for adults, walls are full of childrens' drawings and posters, and chairs are frequently bolted to the floor in rows, minimizing the possibility for group interaction and discussion.

Co-sponsored classes are frequently conducted in an employer's store or factory, union hall, church or neighborhood organization's offices. Community organization facilities are often dirty, noisy, uncomfortable and cramped. However, their informality and limited space are sometimes considered more conducive to student involvement in class interaction than is the case in school buildings. Co-sponsored classes - especially those involving anti-poverty agencies - are often almost completely independent of the public school ABE office which simply supplies a teacher. Speaking of one such arrangement, an ABE director said,

I didn't even know that his classes were not meeting. Of course, we have a problem with that class. We moved four or five times. We have never been able to stay in a definite location for more than two to three months. It has been very hard to keep track of the students...Of course, the co-sponsor is part of the community. It is a community action program. They often try to solve their problems without me. Well, if it is this way we may have to close it.

In this case the community action agency set additional requirements for ABE teachers beyond those normally observed. (e.g., they must teach four

nights a week and ESL teachers must speak Spanish. The ABE teacher agreed to informally sub-contract on a sub rosa basis with another teacher, unqualified by public school standards but selected by the co-sponsoring organization, to teach on the nights she was unavailable.) In such cases, a very different set of classroom rules may pertain. Community groups and leadership can impose sanctions of a totally different kind and order of magnitude from those at the command of a school based ABE teacher.

Adult day schools are relatively uncommon. A few have been established recently as demonstration centers for reaching and educating adults from the hardest to reach, hard-core segment of the target population. These new demonstration projects are sharp departures from traditional adult day schools. The usual day school houses the ABE program along with an adult high school or vocational training program. The concentration of ABE classes in this setting affords obvious but as yet unrealized potentialities for screening, placement and referral, program integration and the development of a student culture which can supplement and reinforce classroom socialization. Unfortunately, one may encounter in practice a traditional formalism in the classroom and an oppressively impersonal institutional climate. Often classes are organized along usual subject matter lines - arithmetic, social studies, etc. These courses are sometimes graded, making it possible to group ABE students by achievement level, a luxury not afforded the teacher in a single class site.

RULE III: INSTRUCTION: INVOLVEMENT IS THE NAME OF THE GAME

If you are over 45 and visit ABE classrooms, you are likely to be overwhelmed with nostalgic reminiscence of your salad days in Muncie,

Indiana. The prevailing mode of instruction in ABE classrooms is that of the elementary school of the 1920's before all those "progressive" educators began their tinkering. Drill, recitation, group blackboard work, doing assignments in class, using workbooks and routinization are familiar hallmarks. There is substantial evidence from the field attesting to the remarkable durability and pervasiveness of the present-recite/test-correct approach.

The Process of Attending

Teachers generally attend students on one of three levels: as a class, in groups or as individuals. They do this to either instruct, encourage or control. Each of these three functions may be exercised by the teacher at any of the three levels. Although each function will be dealt with separately here, it should be understood that the art of teaching ABE classes as they are presently conducted is in no small part related to the skill and sensitivity of the teacher in performing the functions of instructing, encouraging and controlling well and in intimate combination. This involves having a variety of techniques for each, discriminatingly selecting those most appropriate to various specific classroom situations and sensitively timing the distribution of this effort among class, group and individual levels. Some teachers are highly skilled at this multi-functional, multi-level process of attending. General movement from one level of attending to others is frequent and rapid, a factor making for sustained student attention. Sometimes a teacher will be quite aware of doing this and will test her inclination to make such shift in focus by asking for an expression of preference by the students on, for instance, whether to revert back to attending at the class level rather than continuing with individual instruction. Usually she abides by the majority.

Individualized lesson plans are common in basic education classes, less so in ESL. Plans are usually similar in sequence and content for students working at the same level, but units are assigned students according to their present level of performance. The student progresses through the series of exercises at his own pace. When the teacher instructs at the class level it is predicated on the assumption that most students will progress through the material at about the same pace. She is most likely to gear her instruction to the students as a class by focusing on a broad and ambiguously defined middle range of ability, performance and reaction time and hopes to cope with those either above or below this range with special individual assignments.

At the Class Level

The most common pattern of instruction is for the teacher to present the class with either an assignment - a problem or dictation, an explanation - illustration or (rarely) a demonstration, or a series of questions. The class may then copy or repeat in unison, *i.e.*, drill, by reading aloud, pronouncing and spelling a word, reciting multiplication tables, etc., or participate in a dialogue with the teacher who directs questions to the class to be answered by those who volunteer to do so. Drill at the class level, as found most commonly in ESL, implies a relatively narrow range of comprehension, verbal facility, reaction time and confidence to make public disclosure of what one knows. Although this does not appear to exist, in practice only those within this range participate actively in the exercise. If students who remain silent are not threatened with exposure and are not overwhelmed with the pace of the drill, it may provide them with an opportunity to test a series of silent provisional tries. There is little direct evidence to support this optimistic possibility however.

An alternative is for the teacher to solicit or require an individual public response; the student is asked either to "recite" or perform at the blackboard. Active solicitation at the class level almost invariably elicits a patterned student response with the same predictable handful of the most verbal students volunteering, the balance of the class remaining silent. Soliciting a response from a class is usually not an effective instructional tactic in ABE. If, on the other hand, a teacher requires a response, she usually does so by calling on one of the more advanced students first, either unconsciously or to encourage the others to participate.

Teacher-required responses are typically in the form of reviewing materials covered in the last class meeting ("What is a syllable?") with blackboard explanation, a quiz on the use of pronouns, reading paragraphs from a history book (students following in unison as the teacher reads the text sentence by sentence followed by individual student reading and then the teacher repeating difficult words several times with students repeating after her), sentence completion, copying letters on the blackboard and (in ESL) the teacher asking, "What is this?" and students replying, "This is a hat." The teacher-required response most characteristic of ESL is recitation conducted serially according to seating pattern.

In the face of an inadequate student response, the teacher behaves in a variety of ways. She may--with a light touch or brusquely, indicating impatience--prompt, answer her own question, go to another student for an answer to the same or a different question, reprimand those who failed to respond ("Do you mean that I have to spend an hour explaining what I explained yesterday?"), encourage ("You know; come on, take a guess."), "moralize," i.e., remind the class of the importance of taking good notes

and reviewing them out of class, or use "banter control" ("Is anyone enough awake to do this at this time?" Or, "Do you know what we do to students who do not answer? We line them up against the wall and shoot them with a machine gun! Rat-tat-tat-tat!")

Less frequently the teacher checks her own performance when students fail to respond and, for example, deliberately reduces the speed of her speech to assure maximum understanding of her question or, realizing a particular student's fear of public embarrassment, suggests that he may prefer to meet with her individually in private rather than to "share with the class."

Teachers differentiate more from less successful students by giving extra attention to new students, grouping according to achievement, speaking more slowly for less advanced students, giving extra time to slower students or to those disattending, providing more individualized instruction to lower level students, excusing slower or lower level students from recitation and, as previously mentioned, calling upon better students first to recite or respond to a class level question.

Team teaching usually involves a co-teacher working with a segment of the class, such as students having trouble with grammar, vocabulary or pronunciation. When team teaching means co-teaching, it often leads to this way of dividing responsibility or some other form of grouping by performance or ability. When it means that the class as a whole shifts to another teacher after a period of an hour or so, the division of labor is in the subject matter, with one person teaching reading, another arithmetic, etc. This latter variation appears more suitable to intermediate or advance levels of instruction in sites, such as adult day schools, where several ABE classes are conducted at the same time. Both

arrangements are favorable viewed by students, except in cases occasionally reported when students form intensive attachments to a particular teacher and even resist being promoted out of her classroom.

At the Group Level

Elementary school tradition is further reflected in the heavy emphasis teachers place on asking questions. Most classroom interaction involves teacher questioning and students answering.

A third less frequent alternative to following up a class assignment or teacher presentation with class drill, dialogue or individual public response is to break the class into groups to maximize participation. This is most commonly done for recitation and practice; e.g., students are paired to read sentences in dialogue form or go through the "What is that? This is a hat" routine in ESL. Group problem solving, discussion and other adult education methods designed to aid students to learn from each other's experiences are rarely encountered.

At the Individual Level

The final option is for the teacher to shift to attending students individually while the class is working on a problem or individual exercises. These individual checks on student progress may be followed by a class level review. There are five ways in which attending at the individual level is done.

The teacher may attend individual students by "turn taking" - walking up and down the aisles to check their work. She may choose to do this by priority, i.e., those asking for attention, or by routine, i.e., "making the rounds" - stopping at each desk in turn, the order dictated by the seating pattern, and giving everyone "four or five minutes with the teacher."

A few teachers acquire a high level of skill at "multiple individual attending," the ability to give individual attention in rapid succession to several students; e.g.

she will suggest a correction, and, while the student is making the correction, test somebody else, come back and finish up the correction with the first student while she nods encouragement to a third.

As she follows her turn taking, the teacher may feel a problem encountered frequently should be shared and she then reverts back to the class level by asking, "Is anyone else having this problem?" or "How would the rest of you solve this problem?" If the class response indicates others share the problem, this technique can encourage the individual to feel that he is not alone in his difficulty and provide a reassuring "benchmark" against which to measure his progress. If he discovers, however, that he is alone with his problem, his confidence may be seriously undermined.

A second modal way for the teacher to attend individuals is by "search out," seeking those who have trouble and want help. This may involve actively soliciting requests for assistance, asking, "How are you doing?" "Do you understand?" Students requesting individual attention seem always prepared to wait for it while the teacher is helping others. Typically, they get out their pocketbooks and straighten their hair or make up, get out a cigarette or, perhaps, chat with the person next to them. There is little vying for attention. Ask and wait.

A third less common tactic is for the teacher to act as "resource" person by announcing that he is ready to receive students who wish consultation or assistance, e.g.,

Mr. B. remained at the desk for most of the hour. He worked with students individually or in small groups of two or three as they asked for help. There was little contact with most of the students, either in terms of control or instruction. The students "did their thing" independently or didn't do it.

This is the "instant readiness" approach. It is characteristic of a relaxed teaching style which places a premium on self-directed student effort. It is not common in ABE classrooms with their inordinately heavy dependence upon present-recite/test-correct through class level instruction combined with turn taking and search out variations of giving individuals attention.

Another infrequent approach to attending individuals is by having students help each other. More advanced students are sometimes asked to help tutor others. This often generates resentment by those singled out for help. A class often spontaneously indicates an error when a student recites, and students commonly give encouragement to others to recite. Students sometimes informally tutor each other during class breaks, and sharing of each other's class notes is an ordinary occurrence. Students more frequently help each other in ESL classes by translating and explaining assignments in their native tongue. In certain unusual situations, such as in classes with several Chinese students, there is often such tightly cohesive group structure within the classroom that teachers are forced to treat the students as a learning group, and there is more mutual help with evidence of strong group sanctions in operation. Serious academic effort results.

A final alternative tactic for individualizing the attending function is to do so through an aide. The usual pattern is for the aide to work with individual students or groups. He continuously "makes the rounds"

following the search out approach, asking, "Do you need help?" "How are you doing?" or he may shift to turn taking, tutoring and encouraging specific students on a priority basis dictated by the teacher. He typically helps with arithmetic problems, explains word meanings, interprets questions and breaks down problems into manageable components for analysis, corrects answers and homework and performs classroom administrative functions like taking attendance and getting books and supplies that students or the teacher needs. Aides are generally liked by students but sometimes have troubles relating to the teacher who may feel that the aide tends to function too independently or in areas beyond his competence. A teacher may come to feel the aide intrudes between her and the students at the expense of their building a closer relationship.

Innovative Approaches

True departures from present-recite/test-correct are rare in ABE. Three varieties have been identified. One is the "supported self-instruction" approach, as found in some learning laboratories. Students are tested and an individual work plan is prescribed either by a teacher, counselor or supervisor or some combination of these. The student pursues his assignments sequentially by individual study with heavy use made of reading machines and other learning devices, such as TACH-X, AUD-X, controlled reader, etc. He is encouraged to ask for help as he needs it, and it is given on a tutorial basis by a teacher who happens to be in attendance. There is periodic retesting and reformulation of his work plan. The student may come into the learning center anytime of the day or evening and stay for any period he wishes. Many cities are now supplementing their programs with a learning laboratory. Of course, ABE

classes are not organized to provide such instruction, but actual class size (as opposed to reported enrollment totals) in any one period is likely to be small, and one finds some advanced classes almost exclusively tutorial in nature, with the teacher attending only at the individual level.

A different and interesting departure capitalizes on student interest by letting classroom interaction dictate the order and pace of covering desired content rather than having this dictated by some predetermined logic or by merely following the order of commercially prepared materials. An example from an ESL class:

The general outline of what content was discussed in the class period seemed to be quite unstructured, i.e., spontaneous. The experience of observing the discussion within the class was somewhat like witnessing a verbal free association process; one word of comment seemed to trigger a series of definitions, descriptions, etc., until the particular train of thought spent itself. At that point, Mr. M. would appear to refer to the lesson which he had apparently pre-planned to some extent.

In this "loose structure" approach, the teacher, who must have a high tolerance for ambiguity, sets a broadly defined and flexible structure of topics to be covered. Major concepts composing each topic are covered in an order largely determined by student involvement in defining problems, illustrating concepts and testing meanings in their personal experience. Class interaction also determines the speed with which there is movement from topic to topic and in what order this is done. More difficult topics take longer. A good teacher will again find appropriate uses of instruction on class, group and individual levels.

The "loose structure" approach illustrates one encouraging possibility

of teaching in ABE to maximize the congruence between the form of material to be covered and readiness of the learner, "beginning with people where they are" and moving them toward their goal. Students are intimately involved in organizing the learning situation, a real innovation in ABE experience. Its success, of course, is a function of the teacher providing the essential, broad, flexible structure to assure progression and evoking relevant and continuing student contributions within it.

A final sharp departure from the present-recite format is the small group approach in which the teacher, serving in "instant readiness" as a resource person, attends almost exclusively at small group and individual levels. Assignments are given at different times both to individuals and to small groups of three or four. Not all group assignments are the same; one may read aloud into a tape recorder while another reads to each other and a third reads silently first and aloud later. Students usually may select which group they go into, knowing that some work with "easier" and "more difficult" material. Friends are encouraged to stay together, and there is a great deal of socializing within groups. The teacher may strongly encourage a student to join a particular group he feels would best fit him. "I really want you to read aloud - unless you don't really want to." Individuals are expected and encouraged to complete their own assignments. These may be corrected by the student using an answer book located in the front of the room and are often periodically checked by the teacher. When he is not occupied responding to requests for help from a group or individuals working within a group, the teacher will rotate, assuming, in turn, membership in each group and take his turn in the work. From time to time he solicits requests for help, asking the class or a group or individuals how they are doing. Students have great

freedom within their group to "do their own thing" as long as they do not create a serious disturbance. They have found this approach to their liking. Older students sometimes have to get over a set of traditional expectations of teacher behavior before they are completely comfortable in this classroom format.

The most useful finding about teaching resulting from educational research over the past fifty years is that students of different levels of intelligence, personality and other characteristics differ sharply in their performance in different environments. Values inherent in group interaction and discussion, though largely inferred, are grounded in strong research evidence from social psychology and experiential findings of adult educators. They have particular relevance for ABE in the area of attitude change and in creating an environment or "culture" for learning, particularly needed because of the attenuation of socialization processes noted earlier.

Yet the use of learning groups is rare in the program, although they provide an obvious way of individualizing attending functions of the teacher, integrating new ideas with personal experience through discussion and fostering a supportive social environment for active participation in the learning process. It is of considerable interest that the small group approach suggests that ABE students can function and seem to like involvement in learning groups. This study has produced consistent evidence that when discussion is used in the ABE classroom, student involvement is noticeably intensified. It is a method seldom used and indispensable for educating for attitude change, an ABE objective clearly implied by the inclusion of health, consumer and civic education in its broad mandate. If ABE is to take seriously its broad charge, that of

preparing the undereducated to "cope" more effectively with their life situations, there is impelling reason to believe that more innovation within the classroom in use of learning groups is in order.

Content

When achievement testing is done periodically by a counselor or the teacher administers a standardized test such as the ABLE at fixed points in a student's development, often after 200 hours, or when the student's goal is the GED and high school equivalency, these instruments tend to substantially dictate what is taught.

'Can' means, am I able, and 'may' is asking permission. I don't know why they put these in. They have become so accepted now. But they still test this way. Well, we will learn for the test.

There is a major effort to prepare students for the GED examination despite the current program termination at the eighth grade level. "Pre GED" courses are common, GED materials are widely used and most ABE officials conspire to avoid what they consider to be an artificial and unreasonable limitation.

There is little evidence of teachers testing for student achievement toward the contextual goals of ABE, such as health, consumer, family life and civic education. Tests are largely concerned with bread and butter objectives of reading, writing and arithmetic. And responding to Peter Blau's law pertaining to the physics of bureaucracy, those objectives most amenable to exact measurement tend to displace all others. Although the official line mandates instruction in these fields as inherent parts of ABE, this is done incidently in practice as the text happens to deal with

them. They are rarely taught independently as supplements or extensions of reading, writing and arithmetic. Good teachers try to encourage students to relate concepts from these areas in the text to their real lives, but this is an occasional rather than routine practice.

So-called "coping skills," like how to apply for a job, take a test, deal with a public agency, use community resources, etc., are seldom taught except in surprisingly rare instances, and these mostly in ESL, when students are helped with their checking accounts or income tax forms or instructed in the uses of money orders or a library card. Adult educators talk a great deal about the role of coping skills in ABE, but this interest has not been translated into classroom practice.

Generally, ESL classes are the ones which place greater emphasis on teaching for socialization. Students are predominately from other countries, and there is a tradition of Americanization which provides precedents. Consequently, ESL teachers commonly deal with American customs, problems and values through discussion of such topics as women's role, communism, race relations, birth control, pasteurization and U.S. foreign policy. There is typically no patterned sequence for teaching this content. Teachers tend to resort to such considerations to break the dull routine of drill and memorization, selecting topics of special interest to students.

ESL teachers also more commonly supplement frequently nonexistent commercially prepared material and adapt content to the immediate interests of their students. They frequently use references to television shows, museum exhibits, magazine articles, pictures, cookbooks, restaurant menus, reports of student trips, travel slides and maps. Teachers follow the elementary school emphasis on teaching reading rather than spoken English. The rules of grammar still dominate ESL instruction.

Basic education teachers who supplement commercially produced materials often bring in references to black culture and newspaper stories on current issues such as narcotics, the Panthers, war in Southeast Asia, starvation in Biafra or other headline news. Again, little planning or integration with other course content is usually involved.

Teachers are universally encouraged to prepare their own materials to relate content to specific interests of their students, but they do so infrequently. Seldom is time allocated for such work within the ABE program. Most teachers do use other available materials to supplement that which they may order from a city department of education approved list. Frequent and lengthy delays in receiving materials are endemic, the problem being especially acute in scattered, single site classes. Often material used in the classroom is borrowed from elsewhere in the public school system and are not written for adults. It is not uncommon for students to have to buy their texts or materials, although this is not the rule. Programmed material is not popular and is seldom used.

Important though the content of lessons planned by the teacher may be, of at least equal relevance are the "latent lessons" students learn in ABE classes. These incidental and unplanned learnings are a special contribution to student acculturation. Included are latent lessons dealing with the American promise of education as the high road to mobility and success, the idea of phased progression toward a goal, how to dope out benchmarks in an educational setting, industriousness, self-directedness in learning, tactics for getting people to do something, how to teach, and others. In classes fostering small learning groups, they may learn how to participate in group problem solving and discussion. Some may come to see the teacher as a success model. Successful students will

learn to be learners and will acquire self-confidence in their own capabilities. It is curious that the relevance of learning and what is to be learned are seldom discussed in ABE classes but are left implicit and assumed.

The Name of the Game

Regardless of the instructional tactics used, a teacher is generally more likely to elicit active student involvement when she personalizes instruction. She may demonstrate how pronunciation of students' words reflects their place of origin, draw examples from students out of their own experience, solicit information about customs in a student's homeland, encourage student reactions to a story or idea in the materials and otherwise personalize abstract concepts. Highly task-oriented teachers who resist the diversion implied from getting through the course work seldom succeed. Teachers are generally aware of the importance of showing their concern for students as individuals.

Trying for student involvement is not always good enough. In one highly unusual effort, a teacher attempted to conduct a role playing situation in which his class was to set up a mock government to overthrow him in his role as "dictator." Unfortunately, this commendably innovative conception resulted in confusion and considerable resistance because it was poorly planned and executed. Many students did not understand what was expected of them or what was going on.

Occasionally teachers conduct class field trips - to a zoo, planetarium or library. These efforts are hindered because students often cannot afford the cost of transportation or admission fees. Sometimes a "resource person" from the community will be brought into the class to give a talk

and answer questions about credit unions, narcotics, election issues or other topics of interest. This is seldom in response to any inventory of student interest, and students are infrequently involved in planning or making arrangements for the event and rarely are encouraged to prepare questions in advance or assess the success of the visit. Some cities have organized student councils. In one city the council prepares a student newspaper. It should be noted that involving students in any kind of evaluation of methods, materials, teacher performance, scheduling, classroom facilities or anything else for that matter, is almost unheard of in ABE. Students vote with their feet.

Teachers make common use of available audio-visual aids: Most frequently used are films; film strips; slides; charts, such as those illustrating word referents; and tape recorders, both with pre-recorded lessons or other information thought relevant by the teacher, and for students to record exercises. However, most aids are not available to teachers when they are needed, the supply problem being acute. Reading machines are scarce and often initially confusing, but younger students especially tend to like them after becoming acquainted with their operation. Students are encouraged to bring materials to class and a few do so. They are often referred by teachers to TV programs of interest which are sometimes subsequently discussed in class.

There is probably need for a variety of teaching methods and techniques to fit the differing experiences and learning styles of ABE students as well as different educational objectives. We are only beginning to realize the instructional implications of teaching men coming out of a Latin machismo culture, or women teaching black ghetto-raised youth or middle class whites teaching lower class non-whites or anyone teaching

groups of adult students coming from the Chinese culture. The prevailing effort to teach to a "middle range" has resulted in heaviest dropout rates among those of a higher or lower level of achievement, including those who need help most desperately.

RULE IV : THE IDEOLOGY OF MINIMUM FAILURE: A FAILURE IS A FAILURE IS A FAILURE

Eliot Liebow (in Tally's Corner*) tells the story of Richard, a Negro street corner man who has worked for others off and on for many months doing minor plastering, repairs and painting. A real estate agent gives him an unusual chance to bid on a job himself, but he fails to do so. To explain why, Liebow recalls an earlier conversation:

I graduated from high school (Baltimore) but I don't know anything. I'm dumb. Most of the time I don't even say I graduated, 'cause then somebody asks me a question and I can't answer it, and they think I was lying about graduating....They graduated me but I didn't know anything. I had lousy grades but I guess they wanted to get rid of me.

I was at Margaret's house the other night and her little sister asked me to help her with her homework. She showed me some fractions, and I knew right away I couldn't do them. I was ashamed so I told her I had to go to the bathroom.

Liebow comments, "And so it must have been, surely, with the real estate agent's offer. Convinced that 'I'm dumb..I don't know anything,' he 'knew right away' he couldn't do it, despite the fact that he had been doing just this sort of work all along."

This is the failure syndrome endemic to ghetto, barrio and reservation -

*Boston: Little, Brown, 1967, p. 55.

a continually reinforced conviction of failure and incompetence, bred by a grim history of frustrating school experience and subsequent inability to support one's self and one's family, which becomes a self-fulfilling prophesy. Dealt nothing but losses by society's stacked deck of chances for success, a man becomes terrified by the threat of being tested again and still found wanting. Nothing fails like failure.

With rare exceptions, street corner men in black ghettos are not found in public school ABE classes, but students who do choose to attend come with the same bag - in kind if not degree. Most ABE teachers are sensitive to this. They have to be or their students will not come back.

There is a conviction by some adult educators working with the hardest to reach that their success will be a function of the degree to which they can abandon the confines of a traditional teacher role in favor of one of a friend. In ghetto culture this means a willingness and ability to assume broadly defined and demanding obligations of friendship and helping; in that these are understood as reciprocal, the student will more readily participate in the learning situation involving the teacher. Except in rare cases, ABE teachers do not, and often cannot, make such broad commitment to their students - to offer continuing personal involvement and immediate and unsparing succor in every sort of crisis. There is good reason to believe that this is what it takes to work educationally with "hard core" youth and adults. However, the structure of ABE classes, the fractional commitment to the program possible for part-time teachers and their primary obligation to the many more educationally deprived students able to operate in the program as it now functions precludes this.

If ABE teachers infrequently become deeply personally involved with their students out of class in such things as helping them deal with public

agencies, finding jobs or handling family problems, better teachers do make a concerted effort to show their friendly concern for students as individuals and not infrequently establish relationships of closeness and trust. But the unusual situation is one in which

The students who were verbal...seemed to look to the teacher as a kind of 'counselor'—someone who could supply information and advice on almost any subject whether it related to the usual classroom content, their social lives, etc.

Although teachers occasionally eat lunch or have coffee during breaks with students, socializing out of class is rare. They keep up with students' personal lives through checking on reasons for lack of attendance and make home contacts, most often by phone, note or through other students, to encourage them to return to class.

The relaxed and pleasant classroom climate, in which students may arrive or leave as their personal requirements dictate and sleep when they have the will but not the energy to learn, contributes in important ways to giving students encouragement to continue.

Although the structure of the instructional process is traditional, the process itself has been modified to define failure as such out of existence in the classroom and minimize its increments in teacher-student interaction. The only failure becomes the failure to continue to come to class. Those who come are eased into the work of the classroom gently to prevent tension, and teachers try to set a norm that it is all right to make mistakes, even going so far as to intentionally make mistakes themselves and invite students to catch them. There are frequent assurances that to expose a mistake and have it corrected "helps the class learn." Of course, the pressure to maintain attendance substantially fosters the ideology of minimum failure.

There is no tyranny of expectation in ABE classrooms. "Going at your own rate" is honored in theory and, within the constraints of the classroom, in practice. Teachers, in identifying a mistake, will go out of their way to explain that they do so only to help, not to expose weakness. They may prompt a correct response to edge the student off the borderline of failure, or say to a student having trouble with a response at the blackboard, "I don't want to put you on the spot, Francis. You want to sit down and think of one?" They are quick to give a second chance for success, rephrasing a question or asking an easier one. One hears an ESL teacher, reverting to Spanish to reassure a faltering student, "Little by little you go far." Another, in Spanish, tells a student who can't answer, "You don't know tonight, but you soon will," and "Don't be ashamed, nina. The only one who speaks English around here is me."

It is obviously critical to examine closely the dynamics of the encouraging function of attending ABE students. But in this, as in the control function, feeling tone, non-verbal communication and the context of a relationship become more important than what is said.

The tactics of failure reduction in ABE have been highly refined. A most familiar device is to help the student "work through" mistakes by redefining the task into simple components. The troublesome word, sentence or arithmetic computation is broken into parts; the student achieves "instant" success in mastering them individually and, in putting them together, transforms initial failure into accomplishment. Another tactic which goes along with this approach is to set a goal with the student of his not making the same mistake twice.

In addition to prompting or permitting the delay of a response, the teacher sometimes gives a student a different assignment if the original

appears too difficult. He may allay a student's self doubts about being able to do "advanced" mathematics by demonstrating how much the student already knows about the elements involved.

'If $g=3$, then what is e in the equation:
 $e=g+g+g$?' The man in the rear answers "nine."
Mr. C. says (in good spirits) 'And you say
you don't know algebra!'

The student may be frequently reminded of his accomplishments or encouraged that he is close to success, and only a little more effort is needed. This tactic is used when a student is not making mistakes but appears to be slowing down. The teacher may suggest that he reduce the pace of his work to assure his understanding or skip over troublesome problems and come back to them later. Often the teacher compliments a student on a correct or partially correct answer and asks him to go further. In some cases, the student will be permitted to advance along with the class even though he has not performed satisfactorily, but is given special individual assignments.

Another quick and very common form of encouragement is the use of banter, chiding or an expression of friendly concern to encourage. When a new student comes into a beginning class for the first time he has doubts, which are soon relieved, that he can indeed progress and do so at his current level of skill and understanding. A teacher will chide them on as did one, using a mock gruff voice, "Too hard? Don't give me none of that too hard bit."

Sometimes the teacher will go beyond banter and entertain students by witty remarks, teasing, flirting, telling risque stories or acting out poems in pantomime. She does so to encourage them to like her and continue

to come to class, foster a light and easy classroom climate, get their attention, break up the monotony of a task or relieve tension.

The form of instruction has inherent in it implications for encouragement. So "turn taking" by priority tends to direct the teacher's first effort at giving individual help to those who need it most. When at the class level an individual response is required routinely by seating pattern, everyone has to respond with those who falter being helped through the problem. As mistakes are usually common and well distributed, and the teacher makes corrections in a light and easy manner, no one is made to feel failure.

When the teacher either solicits a class response or calls upon someone to recite, a pattern develops with more articulate students volunteering and better students being singled out first by the teacher to perform. This protects the student who is less sure of himself from having to "be first." Teachers who follow the "search out" pattern of giving individual instruction often become highly sensitive to non-verbal cues for identifying those in need of assistance and invariably give special attention to new students and more time on an individual level with those making slowest progress. The use of an aide in the classroom enhances opportunities for this individual attention. Teachers may use aides to correct student mistakes when they themselves find it uncomfortable or awkward to do so.

To encourage a very slow student who is reluctant to join a reading group, a teacher using the small group format can be heard trying hard:

'Who wants Eugene to read in their group? Raise your hand if you want Eugene in the group.' Several hands went up, rather unenthusiastically. Mr. B. commented, 'They really want you, Eugene. You had five votes and there are only four in the group.'

Students, under pressure to perform in the classroom, are relieved by teacher banter, a shift in the level of attending from individual or small group to class level, class breaks, and, by an ESL teacher's occasionally reverting to the native language of the students. One teacher tactic for coping with tension reduction in ESL;

She abruptly stopped and told all the students that they should 'stretch.' Then she said, 'Say, I'm exhausted.' Then say, 'It is not clear.' (This seems to be a particular tactic of Miss T., i.e., a way of recognizing that the students are tired or frustrated and attempting to have them verbalize this together. It is rather like saying, 'I know you're tired, and it's okay, so let's get it off our chests'.)

Some teachers are sensitive to the problem of adult students' taking offense at being taught like children. They sometimes make a special effort to avoid this impression.

Now he starts to sell the 'rods' introduced two weeks ago, admitting that many students are absent because of the rods - feeling they are for children. (The rods are square pieces of wood of varying lengths that can be used to teach various mathematical skills.) Mr. C. is showing them how the rods can be used for learning fractions. He argues that the rods make it easier because they are tangible. He asks that students give more time to see how useful they are before deciding to reject them. They are encouraged to take them home to study.

Others resort to a tactic of "infantilizing" students by adopting a parent's patronizing attitude toward a child.

Mrs. B. says, 'Michael, what does every sentence have to have? Michael smiles

and puts his hands up to his head and says, 'Oh,...I know...' Mrs. B. says 'I know you do; don't disappoint me, Michael.'

One clearly delineated feature of ABE classrooms is a marked and consistent lack of student competition. There are probably several reasons for this. Students do not participate in cohort groups, go at their own pace with individual assignments and benchmarks of progress - awareness of where they are in the program, how long it will take and often how they are doing - are imprecise. This is an important advantage in minimizing failure. Teachers sometimes appear to deliberately foster the blurring of benchmarks for this reason.

A point of highest threat potential is testing. ABE students, especially men, come to class with such diminished self images that any small reversal can evoke echoes of a dozen other humiliations. Serious learners who feel they are doing well, often women, and those moving progressively at intermediate or advanced levels toward the GED, welcome tests as reinforcing benchmarks of progress inasmuch as they are unrelated to grading and results are not publically revealed. For many, tests are threatening and tension producing but are accepted as part of the routine. The problem is most acute for those coming to class for the first time. The number who leave the program or never really get started in it because of being tested is unknown but universally believed to be very high among ABE educators. Nevertheless, other means of evaluating achievement have not been widely substituted.

Often the initial diagnostic or class level placement test is delayed for days or weeks in deference to the aversion of new students to being tested. Teachers make an effort to assure students that test results are

not judgmental but are desirable for diagnostic and practice purposes:

" . . . to help identify what you don't know so we can find out what to teach." Students are given "pre-tests" to coach them for important tests it is felt they must take. Classroom testing includes quizzes covering recent assignments, e.g., spelling, grammar, arithmetic, etc.

More comprehensive reviews correlating performance with grade level and sometimes other standardized achievement tests are administered by the teacher.

The characteristically relaxed rules of classroom conduct sometimes help vitiate the threat to students and the value of testing.

Most of the students seemed quite concerned about a test which they were going to have, and there was much conversation among them, last minute looking at their workbooks, etc. Many of them, especially the Spanish-speaking students, were arranging their seats in groups so that they would be able to cheat. One Spanish girl asked a male friend, a Chinese student, if he would sit near her so that she could see his answers; he obligingly sat in front of her, and, throughout the test, he held his paper to the side so that she could see the answers over his shoulder. In the back of the room, a group of students (mostly Spanish) sat clustered together in a very conspicuous attempt to share information...Mrs. C. made no comment which would indicate that she either knew or objected to what was going on - although on several occasions during the actual test, when a student was obviously talking to another person - she would frequently ask 'innocently,' 'Do you have a question?'

RULE V: CONTROL; COOL IT LIGHTLY

Teacher control of ABE students presents unique problems. The students are adults. They may not be treated as children with impunity. They are diverse to a degree beyond the wildest experience of an elementary

or secondary school teacher. As most come with limited experience as learners in a formal setting, a limited attention span for study, a high degree of self doubt bred of past failure and a tendency to take easy offense, the problem is obvious. When this is compounded with voluntary enrollment and a first priority for the teacher to maintain attendance, the potentialities for difficulty assume formidable proportions.

The control function is primarily one of maintaining student attention and order. It is principally exercised by a combination of disattending and banter with several alternative and supplementary tactics. The relaxation of rules, conventions and rituals of classroom behavior is a control element which features the teacher disattending those who arrive late or noisily or leave early, move about, chat, sleep and otherwise behave in ways which depart from traditional classroom conduct. Teachers disattend students requiring disproportionate time to progress, such as those who might be considered mentally retarded or emotionally disturbed. These people seldom create a real threat to order, and the cost of attention maintainance is too high in terms of the teacher's time. They also disattend occasional mild efforts to bait them or play "games," as when a student will stomp out of the room and duck her head back in to see what effect she has had on the teacher.

Tight control tantamount to that found in high school is simply not feasible in ABE. Teachers who try for it almost invariably come a cropper. The more they concern themselves with trying to control the inattentive or mildly disruptive, the less attention they can give to serious learners. This can generate serious problems.

He noted that one of the students was reading the paper. He focused his

attention on this boy, correcting him for not paying attention and disregarded the answer the woman was giving. She noted that he had forgotten her and made a comment aloud to the class that the teacher was not interested in what one answers anyway - 'See what I mean?!' She then looked up to the window as if to say 'I give up.' This occurred several times, i.e., Mr. R. would call on a student to answer a question and then ignore the reply.

Such a control-oriented teacher will characteristically attempt to entrap students who are inattentive by singling them out to recite or may be driven to "take on" the whole class in a fruitless showdown.

Mr. S. then 'challenged' the students to tell him what the assignment had been; he went around the class calling on individual students to tell him, but when they hesitated, he indicated his impatience by immediately calling on another student. He commented, 'Do you mean that I have to spend an hour explaining what I explained yesterday?'

He cannot help but express the frustration and anger he feels with students who seem to be fighting him all the way.

He made continual remarks such as 'You mean I spent two hours, and you don't understand anything? You say it's dull? I'm finding it dull! It will be five years in September that I've been teaching here.'

But such deterioration of relationship and unpleasantness is rare. Most teachers stay loose with their classes by modifying their expectations, working with those whom they feel will benefit and using control tactics discriminatingly.

Banter control is used in a variety of ways. It is often employed

to keep the class working while the teacher instructs an individual ("Everybody half through? Man, they're grooving tonight!"), to solicit a class response. ("Everybody must be pretty good at spelling; I don't hear a question."), remind ESL students to use English in class ("Are you speaking in English? Anyone speaking Spanish buys me coffee tonight."), tell an individual to get back to work ("Reading something interesting? We need your help with this exercise."), cushion a command ("This place sounds like a protest demonstration. Let's have it quiet.") and indicate an action as inappropriate (a student leaves the room: "Who got away? How dare she . . . ?").

Teachers try to avoid a direct command to an individual by generalizing to the class as a whole, ("Let's get back to work and stop the chatting."). They seldom press the point to force a confrontation which may likely prove embarrassing to both student and teacher.

Nearby a group of about four students. . . were looking at a book and laughing rather loudly. Mrs. B. looked up from her work and stated toward the direction of the group, 'It's getting pretty noisy in here.' None of the students seemed aware of her comment and continued to talk together, although no longer laughing. Mrs. C., after receiving no response from them, went back to working with a student and made no further comment. The group of students returned to their seats a short time later.

Similarly, student hostility toward the teacher is dealt with gingerly. The teacher typically backs away from a potential confrontation.

Mr. S. approached one of the men [who had been making loud derogatory remarks about him] and asked him what he was interested in - cars, clothes, music? He was attempting to propose a topic about which the student could write

for the class assignment. The student responded 'no' to each query and was quite defiant in tone. Mr. S. finally said, quite defensively, 'It's just a suggestion' and walked away.

Threats are uncommon. Teachers may threaten a test or to separate students who wish to sit together but have so little leverage that other threats are apt to be transparently empty.

One of the students asked her what would happen if they didn't do this; she replied, they would be 'in trouble.' The student asked, 'What kind of trouble?'; Miss T. replied with a smile, 'I'll think of something.'

Another control tactic of dubious value is embarrassment. "Children, I would like your attention; that's right, you behave like children!"

Then she addressed one of the male students who was talking, stating 'Tommy big mouth, are you ready?' She then stated, 'I'm sorry, that was fresh, I apologize.'

Mild shock is a tactic occasionally used to secure attention. A teacher may use taboo words or make derogatory statements about the United States to achieve this effect.

The strategy of lavishing encouragement on every student effort, high encouragement when they make a correct response, the "working through" type of encouraging support when they are not correct, is still another method of control.

A "bait" tactic is sometimes resorted to in an attempt to control attendance. This can involve having an aide give dancing lessons, promising to show slides of students' native countries, or having a class party on a future class meeting. The promised bait is seldom an

attractive enough incentive to the student to motivate him to respond if he is otherwise disinclined to do so.

Control problems are more difficult in day school and beginning level classes. They are probably greater in basic education than in ESL. In unusual co-sponsored classes where the class is composed of a pre-existing cohesive group, responsibility for control is often shared by group members who tend to police classroom disturbances themselves, leaving teacher control largely a matter of attention maintenance. Students who stay with the ABE program generally share middle class attitudes, take their work seriously and present few behavioral problems.

Modes and variations in urban classroom interaction have been delineated in this section. The pervasive influences of exceptional student diversity and a dominant policy emphasis on attendance maintenance are traced. Effects of these factors and the distinctive character of ABE's target population are analyzed in terms of significant variations in classroom rules and conventions, found conspicuously relaxed, an ideology of minimum failure with distinctive tactics for failure reduction, a set of attenuated control mechanisms and instructional methods and content heavily laden with the crust of elementary school tradition.

The modal pattern of instruction involves a teacher presentation or assignment followed, in ESL, by class level drill, dialogue or especially solicited or required individual public response. In basic education students are taught more frequently on an individual level by "turn talking" and "search out." Both ESL and basic education teachers occasionally use small groups for practice and recitation. Teachers attend the "middle range" of students and hope to deal with others on an individual

basis. Marked attrition in attendance of slower and more advanced students results.

In single class sites heterogeneity makes individualization of instruction essential. Student competition is minimal. Although innovative instructional practices are rare, a promising few have been identified. The value of interpreting abstract ideas in terms relevant to the lives of ABE students has wide acceptance in theory, but little planning is done for such effort. Important "latent lessons" are learned without being taught.

Content is influenced by the GED and other tests, especially in intermediate and advanced classes, which are most frequently found in the program. Serious students, especially at these levels seek benchmarks of progress and welcome confidential test results. Testing is often a problem for new and beginning students. There is little initial screening done in the program. Health, consumer, family life and civic education and "coping" skills are taught only incidently. Teachers seldom prepare their own materials but are eclectic in using what is available.

In general, the program works moderately well for those being served without involving much change in agency practice. Students who stay in the program are middle class oriented in attitude; "hard core" students are rarely involved in Title III classes.

IV. STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS AND PERSPECTIVE

To be functionally illiterate is to lack language skills necessary to cope with the requirements of adult life. The illiterate adult has difficulty reading the newspaper, if he reads it at all, difficulty understanding employment applications, income tax forms, even the lease on his apartment; he cannot help his children with their schoolwork; he cannot pass a simple test to qualify for a promotion or a better job; he is often a gullible consumer, an easy mark for dishonest business practices, and a citizen ill equipped to make decisions for public policy. The cumulative effect of these disabilities seals the fate of the illiterate. He is found disproportionately at the dirty end of every index of social well being.

It should surprise no one that the typical ABE student is poor as well as educationally disadvantaged. A 1967 survey of ABE students indicated that approximately 50 per cent had family incomes of less than \$4,000.¹ But only about 14 per cent were unemployed and seeking employment. Of those employed, a great majority are unskilled, semiskilled or service workers. In New York City, in 1968-69, of over 2,600 ABE students in occupational categories other than housewife, 42 per cent were unskilled or semiskilled workers. Only 11 per cent were skilled. The number unemployed only slightly exceeded the reported national average for ABE participants.²

¹National Advisory Council on Adult Basic Education (First Annual Report). Washington D.C., 1968, p. 46.

²New York State Department of Education. "1968-69 Title III ABE Program Statistics - New York City" (Computer printout). Subsequent references to New York City statistics based on these data.

Despite their economic marginality, a majority of Title III ABE participants do not receive welfare benefits. The number of welfare recipients would undoubtedly be higher were it not for special ABE programs like WIN (Work Incentive) and WEP (Welfare Education Plan) that enroll many thousands, particularly in urban areas. Nevertheless, substantial numbers of Title III students do receive welfare assistance. In New York City, 16 per cent received some form of welfare aid in 1968-69. Nationally, the figure is approximately 19.5 per cent.

Participants in ABE span the range from adolescence to the senior citizen. Most, however, appear to be relatively young. In New York City, nearly 80 per cent of all Title III registrants in 1968-69 were between sixteen and thirty-nine years of age. Less than 2 per cent were sixty or older. Data from Detroit suggest that ESL students tend to be younger than native born blacks. A survey in 1966-67 indicated that 45 per cent of the foreign born were thirty or younger compared with 21 per cent of native born blacks.¹ Inner city ABE students also appear somewhat younger than their counterparts in rural areas. National data show student median age considerably lower in states with large urban populations.

Interestingly, the proportion of women in ABE is considerably higher in urban areas. Nationally, females account for 55 per cent of total enrollment. But in New York City, just over 70 per cent in 1968-69 were women and in Detroit, female enrollment for the same year was 67 per cent. In the six cities studied, only one out of three ABE students was male.

¹Detroit Public Schools. Project R.E.A.D. Survey, 1967. (mimeographed). Subsequent references to Detroit survey data are based on this document.

Racial and ethnic backgrounds of students also vary enormously, both within and between cities, and in general, reflect the racial composition of the ghetto poor. In some cities, however, there appear to be proportionately fewer native born blacks and a relatively greater number of non-English speaking participants. In New York City, for example, in 1968-69 there were 996 native born Americans (mostly black) enrolled in ABE, 161 naturalized citizens, 1,393 Puerto Rican Americans, and 1,226 aliens. In Detroit, only 60 per cent of the total of over 4,200 enrolled in ABE were native born blacks. As might be expected, in Washington D.C. almost all students in ABE are native born blacks and in San Francisco there is a large number of orientals in the program as well as a mix of native born blacks, whites, Mexican-Americans and aliens. In the six cities studied, the number of native born white Americans was small; in New York and Washington it was negligible.

A striking feature of urban ABE is the large number of foreign born students. Some are naturalized and others intend to become citizens, but many will probably never take this step. In New York City, Cubans, Haitians, Dominicans, and Jamaicans are well represented with smaller numbers coming from elsewhere in Latin America, Asia, and the Near East. There are many Asian aliens in San Francisco's program and also in Boston's. Washington has a surprising number of Iranian students. Many are in this country on student visas; others on tourist visas attend ABE classes in the hope of changing to student status which permits a longer stay in this country.

A surprising proportion of ABE students have completed eight, ten, or twelve years of school, but remain functionally illiterate. Nationally, 25 per cent have had nine or more years of schooling, including the foreign born. Urban ABE students appear to have more years of school than others. Nearly 48 per cent in New York City have completed nine or more years. In Detroit, 33 per cent of native born blacks and 46 per cent of the foreign born reported schooling of nine or more years. Such figures must be interpreted cautiously since individuals often exaggerate the amount of schooling they have had.

It is not surprising to discover that unmarried students are more common in urban areas where ABE students tend to be younger. About 39 per cent of New York City's ABE population are single, compared to 24 per cent nationally. Just less than a quarter of married students in New York City were reported as not living with spouse.

So the urban ABE student is likely to be young to middle aged, poor and employed as an unskilled or semiskilled laborer or service worker. If his native language is English, he is most likely black. If he does not speak English, he is probably Puerto Rican, Mexican-American or Chinese American. Of the many aliens, most speak Spanish but many are from China, Japan, and other Asian countries and some from Europe and the Near East. Two-thirds of ABE enrollees are women. Most students are married, and less than 20 per cent receive welfare assistance. Although they are functionally illiterate, a large proportion have had nine or more years of formal schooling, and some are even high school graduates.

MOTIVATION

Illiterate adults enroll in ABE for many reasons: to get better jobs, obtain a high school diploma, help their children with homework, get a driver's license, "better themselves," meet people, and so on. Motives are typically multiple and may be extremely diffuse. Although students often give more than one reason for attending—for example, a young mother wants to help her children with their homework and at the same time increase her literacy skills to get a better job—it is usually possible to determine which factor is most important to the individual. Motivation is crucial in understanding what ABE means to an adult learner. The unemployed man with a family sees the program very differently from a Japanese tourist brushing up his English.

A majority of ABE participants enroll for job related reasons. In many cases, they also want to earn a high school diploma because they believe it necessary for a better job. Their interest is not in education for its own sake or in the GED as a ticket to college. As a young Puerto Rican woman trained in IBM keypunching put it, "When I looked for a job, they asked for a high school diploma. They wanted two years of experience and the diploma."

Some students are bitter about employers who demand educational credentials that they feel are unnecessary to do a job. In the words of a middle aged black man who had failed exams for the Post Office and the New York transit system,

Everywhere you go you have to take a test for a job, and how you gonna take that test if you don't know a job? It's just a front. It's a front cause a man can do the job without a college education. Schooling knocks me back every time.

One can only guess at the numbers of ghetto youth and "hard core unemployed" who refuse to enroll in ABE or job training programs because they are convinced that "the system" is stacked against them.

As a matter of fact, the program rarely reaches the hardcore unemployed. As noted above, only 14 per cent of those enrolled in ABE are unemployed and seeking employment. The figure for New York City for the past several years has averaged only slightly higher. National statistics on characteristics of unemployed ABE participants are not available. However, our data indicate that few ABE participants in the cities studied are mature minority group males who are chronically unemployed. Mature males, particularly native born blacks, are substantially underrepresented in the ABE population.

Except for periods between jobs, students labor in low status, low pay, hard and generally undesirable jobs. They work as stockboys, domestics, clerks, nurses aides, deliverymen, and janitors; a large number work in light industry, in factories that make shirts, bottletops, and ball point pens. Whatever they do and wherever they work, they are economically marginal. In general, ABE students gross less, often substantially less, than \$100 per week. The jobs they would like to have are those with a little more status, better working conditions, more security and a livable wage. Women who work in factories would prefer to work in offices as typists or secretaries; nurses aides would like to become licensed practical nurses; janitors or dishwashers aspire to civil service jobs with the post office, the transit system or the parks department; and many, of course,

would like a promotion to a job with more security and better pay.

Job Career

A distinction should be made between students preparing for a specific job and those interested in general job upgrading--getting more education in order to get any better job than the present one. Those interested in getting a specific job often must pass a test or obtain educational credentials for a promotion. A man will attend an ABE class to learn fractions and decimals so that he can pass the test for foreman in the plant where he works. A Spanish-speaking student who works in a restaurant may not have to pass a test, but must improve his English in order to become a chef,

My boss told me that she is going to send me to cooking school after six months. They will pay for the whole thing, and I will have more money. I have to learn English first.

The need for academic credentials is frequently cited. A high school equivalency diploma is often needed to qualify for promotion. Sometimes the requirement of a diploma is viewed as specious. One factory worker stated that he could perform the duties of a foreman, but could not get the job without a diploma. He noted bitterly that if he did not get the diploma, the company would hire an "outsider" and he would have to train the new man himself. Many paraprofessionals in schools and other community agencies attend ABE classes to obtain the diploma they need to keep their jobs or take a next step on their "New Careers" ladder. Many are referred to ABE because they lack minimum educational qualifications to enter job training programs.

One provocative finding of this study is the prevalence of a very different kind of career pattern and aspirations among the

ghetto poor. Sociologists commonly think of career in middle class hierarchical terms; one works his way up from one level of responsibility and reward to the next. For many ABE students, this is not the case. Career is accurately perceived by them as a gently sloped lateral movement to a "better job." This is not seen as the "next step" in a pattern of upward mobility at all. What they seek instead is a wider range of choice of jobs which are less fatiguing or have more security or convenience, or freedom or better pay. It is for this reason they are interested in upgrading their basic educational skills.

The very modest educational and career aspirations of most ABE students can be attributed in part to their limited life space. Many in the urban ghetto are unaware of job and educational alternatives open to them. Their horizons are severely constricted by the geographical, social, and psychological parameters of ghetto life.

The emphasis on the high school diploma in the world of work is clearly reflected in the stated goals of many of these individuals. Typical is a forty-seven year old black man who never attended school. A friend in a CCC camp taught him to read when he was sixteen years old. He now wants to earn a high school diploma in order to get a better job, and tells of many jobs he has missed because he does not have one. Others are less specific in their educational objectives. They just want more education to get a better job. A young Puerto Rican woman explained,

I came first to Manpower. I wanted a training job. They gave me a test that I failed. They told me I needed more education, a little bit of everything--math, reading, vocabulary. I would like to have a nice job and I'm trying hard to get it.

Some believe that the high school diploma is beyond their reach. Another Puerto Rican woman, who thinks finishing high school would be too difficult for her says, "I want to learn English and math. I'd like to take another job better than the factory."

Like many in ABE, one middle aged black man has limited aspirations. He has had a succession of low paying, menial jobs: kitchen worker, janitor, packer in a manufacturing plant. He was last employed as a superintendent in an apartment building but he was evicted when the landlord installed an oil furnace. This happened to him three times in succession. "You can see why I want to get an education. I've been evicted three times. Every time they get an oil burner." His wife is ill, and he is desperate for a job - "most anything, just so its work."

The unemployed building superintendent may be said to be clinging precariously to the very bottom of the job ladder, but he does not think of it as a ladder to climb, and for him it is a misleading metaphor. His is more accurately a lateral career. A related case is an Italian immigrant who has a good job as a press machine operator. He runs seven of eight presses, but feels that at his age (39) he will not be able to run that many machines for very long. He wants a high school diploma and maybe two years of college to qualify for a less strenuous office job. A West Indian man, forty-two, is in a similar position. He has a job as a machinist, but the work is heavy and gets more difficult for him as time goes by. He is enrolled in ABE to improve his English and math so he can enter a training program in radio electronics.

The person who enrolls in ABE for job-related reasons can be described as having a "job career." Most people are in job careers.

It is primarily the upper middle class, business and professional people, who engage in both educational and occupational careers of classic upward mobility. The job career has no institutionalized pattern of status passage and lacks the fine gradations and careful scheduling of professional and business careers. The job career is based on simple job upgrading: more security, a little higher status, a bit more pay, and so on. This is not to say that the upgrading is not important. On the contrary, a little more money can make an enormous difference in the way people live. And a little more security and status can make a big difference in the way a person feels about himself. Although the job careerist may never rise very far from the bottom of the socio-economic ladder, the gains he makes, though modest, are of critical importance to him and can have a profound effect on the quality of his life.

Educational Career

A perspective related to the job career is that of "educational career." Although the educational careerist is interested in a good job in the future, his primary concern at present is to obtain a high school diploma and perhaps go on to college. Many educational careerists are young men or housewives who are intelligent and ambitious and have a strong future orientation. One young man, a Costa Rican, has worked out a timetable for completing high school. He then plans to go on to college. Another feels that he will be ready for the high school equivalency test in about two years and eventually hopes to enter the local community college. When asked about his plans after finishing high school, another educational careerist replied, "I will go on; I would be foolish not to." Many

educational careerists are supported by parents or husbands and can afford to "go on." They are a small minority in ABE. The great majority must struggle to make ends meet from day to day.

Concerned Mothers

Most men in ABE, except those with their working lives behind them, are in job careers. Many women, however, enroll in ABE so that they can be better mothers to their children. If they are foreign born, they attend class to learn English. It is important to them to be able to speak to their children in English and to be able to look after their children's interests in an English speaking world. Similarly, many black mothers born in this country enroll in ABE in order to help their children with schoolwork. A related motivation is to keep the respect of children who are moving ahead of them in formal schooling. Many whose primary reason for attending ABE classes is to be better parents are also motivated by job career concerns. A fairly typical middle aged, black mother stated that she wants a high school diploma so she can talk to her children (a daughter is in college, a son in the Air Force) and to qualify for a job in case she wants to return to work. These "concerned mothers" can be found in most ABE classrooms. Together, they constitute a substantial minority of the total ABE population.

The concerned mother may find additional sources of motivation once she enrolls in ABE. A young black mother stated that her original reason for attending class was to be able to help her 6th grade daughter with schoolwork. She soon discovered that she enjoyed learning: "Since I've started, now it's for both of us."

Many mothers in the urban ghetto, like middle class mothers, feel that education is the key to a good job and a decent life. Unlike most of their middle class counterparts, they are often functionally illiterate. So they return to school because they believe education will help them, in one woman's words, to be "fit" mothers to their children.

Social Misfits

It is ironic that some of the most scarred young victims of the inner city ghetto should sit in the same classes with mothers determined that their children will escape such fate. Nevertheless, at least in some cities, a small but not insignificant minority of ABE participants can only be classified as "social misfits." These are the mentally retarded, the emotionally disturbed, and the high school "pushouts." Most are young, ranging from eighteen or nineteen to the middle twenties. Undoubtedly, there will be more of them in the future because of the recent reduction in age limit in ABE to sixteen. These young people are more likely to be found in day classes. Most have nothing to do during the day because they are either unemployable or living with parents and unable to make a living.

For emotionally disturbed and retarded adolescents who have been eased out of school or other institutions, ABE serves as a kind of day care center or sheltered workshop. In one day school, the retarded students formed a small group that tended to stay together in various classes. Although they are not usually disruptive, retarded students can demand a lot of the teacher's time and thereby slow down the rest of the class. Most have unrealistic aspirations that

can only lead to frustration and unhappiness. Typical is a youth who reads at the third grade level, but is determined to finish high school:

I am going to stay in this program for as long as I can, I am going to stick with this. And keep my chin up as long as I can. I want to get a diploma. I only need fifteen more credits for a high school diploma.

The high school pushouts present a different sort of problem. Unlike the retarded students, they are often bitter and hostile and present discipline problems for the teacher. They, too, often stick together in small groups. A single class in one day school contained four young blacks who had been expelled from high school, three for academic and one for disciplinary reasons. All stated that they were enrolled in ABE in order to get a high school diploma, and all agreed that they dislike ABE more than the high schools from which they had been expelled. In some cities special arrangements are made for young high school dropouts. Classes are often co-sponsored with the Neighborhood Youth Corps or a similar organization and held in storefronts or other non-school facilities. Some such arrangement may provide a more effective learning environment for these young people.

It should be emphasized that ABE students in the social misfit category constitute a very small proportion of the total. Only in one city studied, which has a large adult day school, did these troubled and troublesome young people comprise an appreciable segment of the total ABE enrollment.

Self-Improver

Another discernible type of ABE participant is the "self-improver." Many older people fall in this category, particularly housewives and men with their working lives behind them. These individuals often never had the chance to complete more than a few years of formal schooling and welcome the opportunity to "better" themselves by enrolling in ABE. Many self-improvers were born and raised in the rural South and had to leave school as children to work in the fields. They include the aging victims of segregated schools:

We didn't have a very good education in Mississippi. The white kids would all go into the big city to school on buses. But there weren't any buses for us.

A secondary motivation for many self-improvers is to learn to read better so they can participate more actively in church services, particularly reciting from the Scriptures.

I do a lot of work in my church and somethings I'm fearful of doing. That's one reason [for returning to school]. It's embarassing if you're called upon.

But for many of those who have lived with the burden of illiteracy for most of their lives, learning to read and write is its own reward. This perspective was succinctly expressed by an elderly black woman, who when asked why she had returned to school replied, "I don't know exactly. My father, when he came North to work, went to school. I always said if I went [North] I would go to school."

Individuals whose major motivation for attending ABE classes is self-improvement are often found in classes located out in the community - in churches and neighborhood centers where they feel

at home. Teachers and administrators are quick to point out that many people, particularly in these outreach sites, attend ABE classes for social reasons. The data do suggest that participants in classes co-sponsored by churches and other community groups often know each other and in fact may comprise a pre-existing group. In addition, these classes are often less academically demanding and coffee breaks tend to be longer and more sociable. Clearly, for many individuals a major component of the self-improvement perspective is socializing. Inasmuch as there are other opportunities to socialize, self-improvement is often the more salient motive for this group.

The Aliens

Foreign-born students in ESL classes comprise a substantial proportion of the total ABE enrollment in the cities studied. A large number of the foreign-born fall in the job career category. A number of immigrants, however, were professionals in their native countries and hope to resume their professional careers here.

It is useful to distinguish between the foreign-born who are or intend to be U.S. citizens and aliens who are on tourist or student visas and intend to return home. Most of the former can be classified as job careerists or concerned mothers. The perspective of the latter group, "the aliens," is very different. They enroll in ABE to learn English, either for their own interest or because they need remedial work before beginning college or graduate school in the United States. Many of those on tourist visas appear to be at loose ends. Some attend classes in the hope of winning a student visa which permits them to stay longer in this country. Others are looking

for Americans to marry so they can become citizens. Still others enroll in ABE in order to be able "to talk to people" or "get around better" while in the United States.

Aliens on student visas are often enrolled in ESL in preparation for advanced study at American colleges and universities. One finds a seventeen year old from Nicaragua who graduated at the top of his high school class. He wants to study chemical engineering here because engineering is "far superior" in the United States and he will settle for "nothing but the best." Aliens on student or tourist visas are most likely to be found in day classes. Their number is undoubtedly greater in the coastal cities than elsewhere in the country.

The typology of ABE students presented here is certainly not exhaustive. The data suggest additional minor types. For example, there are the "romeos" who enroll in ABE for the purpose of picking-up girls and probably girls who want to meet men. Nevertheless, the above categories appear to account for the vast majority of students.

PERSPECTIVE

In this section, an effort will be made to describe ABE from the point of view of the functionally illiterate adult. Emphasis will be on student perspective, the way in which the student defines his experience in ABE.¹

Recruitment

Before he decides to enroll, the student must first hear about the program. ABE professionals spend a lot of time and effort on recruitment with little reliable information to go on concerning

¹For a definition of perspective, see Howard S. Becker, et al. Boys in White, 1961, p. 34.

the relative effectiveness of various techniques. Announcements in the mass media, a widely used recruitment device, appear to be relatively ineffectual. Of the students interviewed only a small fraction indicated that they had learned about ABE through the radio or newspapers. Data from a survey of ABE students in Detroit support this conclusion. Only 12 per cent of native born blacks and 8 per cent of the foreign born reported they had first learned about ABE through newspapers, radio, or television.

The most effective recruitment technique, if it can be called that, is word of mouth. Most students interviewed had heard about ABE from family, friends, or co-workers. Often the friend or co-worker was a student himself or a former student. Interestingly, a Detroit survey indicated the 67 per cent of the foreign born, but only 25 per cent of native blacks, first heard of the program from a friend or family member. Word gets around fast in the cohesive social network characteristic of immigrant ghettos.

The public schools are another source of information about ABE. Children are sent home with flyers and parents hear about adult classes from teachers or at meetings or other affairs. Forty-one per cent of blacks surveyed in Detroit but only 17 per cent of the foreign born reported that they learned of ABE through the public schools. The difference may be due in part to the fact that the foreign born tend to be younger and are less likely to have children in school. Perhaps, too, there is less involvement with the schools among the foreign born because of the language problem.

Many community organizations serve as sources of referral or recruitment. Co-sponsors such as churches, unions, hospitals and

businesses usually provide students as well as space to meet. Many participants are referred by welfare or employment agencies. Adults who do not meet minimum educational standards for job training programs are sometimes referred to ABE.

In brief, illiterate adults learn about ABE opportunities in many ways, but family, friends, and co-workers seem to be the most common sources of information. Many hear about ABE through unions, churches, hospitals, prisons and other co-sponsors. Referral by employment, welfare, or job training agencies is another major source of students, particularly those interested in occupational upgrading. Still others hear about ABE through the public schools and the mass media. A few just walk in off the streets.

Expectations

New students have any number of expectations of what ABE is all about. Although legislation passed by Congress in the spring of 1970 will extend the Title III program through high school, the program at present is supposed to bring illiterate adults up to the equivalent of 8th grade. Despite the mandated 8th grade ceiling, most students come with the expectation that ABE will prepare them for the GED exam. This is what they are told by their friends, what is sometimes printed on the flyers ("Work toward high school equivalency") and, in fact, this is what is unofficially going on in many places.

It is hardly surprising that few see ABE as a basic skills or grade school equivalency program. In the first place, many of those enrolled (nearly half in New York City) have completed nine or more

years of schooling and some are high school graduates. The 8th grade diploma has no meaning for these people. In fact, the 8th grade diploma has little meaning for anybody except as a benchmark for those interested in the high school equivalency certificate. Today, as the job careerists in ABE are painfully aware, almost any decent (or not so decent) job requires a high school diploma.

Although the 8th grade diploma may not be the goal of very many, there are a large number in the program who are not interested in the high school diploma either. Many of the foreign born simply want to be able to speak English. Some job careerists, and probably the majority of the concerned mothers and the self-improvers, are mainly concerned with upgrading their basic educational skills in order to meet a variety of felt needs.

The first few weeks in ABE can be a period of difficult adjustment, especially for those who have been out of school longest. Some have unpleasant recollections of earlier school experiences, and many feel that returning to school is an admission of failure or inadequacy. Feelings of shame and defensiveness are common, at least initially. One veteran counselor claimed that he can always identify a total illiterate by the half dozen pens prominently displayed in a shirt pocket. "Embarrassment" is the word students most often use to describe their feelings during the first weeks of class. For those who remain in the program, anxiety and shame tend to diminish with the awareness that they can learn and that other students are at their skill level as well. A young Puerto Rican man expressed the feelings of many ABE students:

I thought it would be confused, thought I would be dumb, that I would quit, that others would be brighter. But then I saw what I needed and that others were not all bright. I feel very good coming to class. I feel good walking down the street. If anyone calls me a dumb dumb, I can say, 'just give me time and I'll know the answers.'

Opinions

Feelings of insecurity are one reason why so many ABE students develop an attachment to their teacher. Many teachers (to their credit) are friends and counselors to their students as well as mentors. Students often decline to be promoted or even to graduate in order to remain with certain teachers. This is especially true of older students who may take a less instrumental view of ABE.

Illiterate adults are often too unsure of themselves to risk revealing their weaknesses by questioning the educational process or by criticizing a teacher's performance. Instead, they make their feelings known by simply staying away. Significantly, a teacher's age, sex, or race seems to be less important to most students than personal qualities of concern, empathy, and respect for others. Sincere and competent teachers are almost always well liked. One young woman burst into tears when her teacher told the class he would not return next year.

There is one exception to the general positive feeling of students for teachers. Young high school pushouts are often resentful of any authority. Middle class teachers have difficulty gaining the respect and confidence of these young men. The militant young blacks and Puerto Ricans are contemptuous of what they conceive to be the "Uncle Tom" attitudes of most teachers.

Students not only think their teachers are nice people; they think they are good teachers. Small classes permit a good deal of individualization in teaching, and students generally appreciate this. Not everyone, however, is happy with an individualized approach to ABE instruction. A few of the older students have traditional or different notions of what school should be. One elderly lady steadfastly refused to do workbook exercises on her own: "I don't think it should be done that way. It is a fact that people learn by reciting." Few of her younger classmates would agree.

Students are also generally happy with the curriculum and instructional materials that are available. Although students conceive of the curriculum in terms of the traditional 3 R's, instruction in other areas such as citizenship, consumer education, and "coping" is considered interesting and important.

Many classroom materials used in ABE were developed for children and undoubtedly are not ideal for adult instructional purposes. Good teachers, however, are careful not to use materials with childish illustrations or inane content. ABE students are aware that adult materials are difficult to obtain and don't seem to mind if a particular unit is not entirely appropriate for adults.

Students who have used controlled readers, tachistiscopes, and other instructional hardware are usually favorably impressed. Students like machines that allow learners to work at their own pace. Another plus for the machines is that they permit learning to occur in private and thus obviate the fear of public humiliation. Some people enjoy the machines simply because they are interesting gadgets that relieve the tedium of rote learning tasks. Unfortunately,

instructional hardware is seldom available, particularly in classes located in non-school facilities.

Student Relationships

One consequence of the emphasis on individualized instruction in ABE is the attenuation of group processes and group consciousness. Most students see the classroom as a place where they come to "do their own thing" more or less independently of others. The ABE class is thus an aggregate of individuals rather than a true group. The lack of a cohort -- a group that moves through the system in regular sequence -- distinguishes ABE from almost every other form of educational organization. Students are aware of this distinction.

There isn't any interaction here. It is all individual. People come to learn and then leave and go home their separate ways. We are all here for different reasons. I guess maybe we do have a common goal - to learn - but that is about it.

Although emphasis on individual instruction accentuates the fractionation of the ABE classroom, the diversity of students is the more fundamental reason for the characteristic lack of group feeling. Where students come from similar backgrounds or constitute a pre-existing group, as in many classes co-sponsored by community organizations, there is a stronger sense of group identity. This is reflected in the more easygoing and social nature of the classroom and in longer, more elaborate coffee breaks. It is noteworthy that the coffee break is often dispensed with in the more "businesslike" classes ("I don't want a fifteen minute break. I'm in a hurry.")

Despite the diversity of student backgrounds, the atmosphere in the ABE classroom is almost always open and friendly. In fact, the ambience of relaxed informality and pleasantness presents a marked contrast to the tense sterility of many public school and college classrooms. This is not to say that the ABE classroom is anything like a "melting pot." On the contrary, there is a tendency for students of similar backgrounds to sit together and to form small, informal groups. One often finds the Chinese women in one corner of the room, black men in another, the Puerto Ricans in the front rows, and so on.

When friendships develop, they tend to be with others of similar background. Although it is common for students to get to know two or three of their classmates, the friendship rarely extends beyond the confines of the classroom. It seems that the commonality of interest defined by the ABE class is too tenuous to provide the basis for continuing friendships. Then, too, urban dwellers in general are often suspicious of strangers and chary of personal involvement.

Although ABE students are labeled "poor" and "deprived" and lumped together in one category by middle class professionals, they themselves are aware of numerous social distinctions and gradations. Intra-racial and intra-ethnic antagonisms are common. There is a long history of mutual hostility between Jamaican and American blacks. Puerto Ricans from urban areas are often contemptuous of "hillbillies" from the inner island. Socio-economic status distinctions are by no means confined to the middle or upper classes. In one ABE class (held in a church), an illiterate unemployed black man was ostracized by a group of respectable black

ladies who wished to disassociate themselves from a person they considered "low class." Outright hostility of this sort is rare. But this incident serves to illustrate an important characteristic of many ABE students--their essentially "middle class" outlook. This is not surprising, since those who attend are a self-selected group determined to "better" themselves through education.

The lack of common cultural or group norms is reinforced by the absence of the usual classroom rules and regulations. About the only norm considered important by both teachers and students is regular attendance. Students are keenly aware of the teacher's expectation that they attend regularly. Significantly, students often complain that too many of their classmates do not show up regularly. As a result, the class is held back while the teacher reviews material missed by the absentees.

Students, however, are quick to point out that there are many unavoidable or at least understandable reasons for absence from class. Overtime work, sickness in the family, and just plain fatigue are some of the factors cited by students as contributing to low attendance. Many students come directly to class after a long day of hard physical labor. Often, they haven't time to eat or wash up. They say, "you have to make a sacrifice" to come to class.

The Locating Process

A key to understanding student perspective on ABE is the concept of "locating." Students in ABE, and in this they resemble school children and college students, want to know where they are so that

they can evaluate their progress. Locating is a simple matter for college students: All that is needed is to compute a grade point average. Locating is also relatively unambiguous for school children. Like college students, they receive grades and, perhaps more important, they are promoted or not promoted to the next class. The locating process is much more difficult in ABE. Students do not receive grades and often there is no promotion to a higher level; when there is it may be difficult to evaluate what the promotion means in terms of locating oneself.

In order to understand the dynamics of the locating process, it is necessary to consider the ABE student's goals, his time perspective and the benchmarks he employs to judge his progress.

It has been noted that ABE students come for a variety of reasons. Job careerists are interested in job upgrading, concerned mothers want to help their children with schoolwork, educational careerists want a high school diploma so they can continue on to college, and so on. For the great majority of students, ABE is instrumental to the achievement of one or more specific goals. These goals serve as the constants in the locating equation. Although many students come for job or family related reasons, the equivalency certificate tends to be the generic instrumental goal. That is, one decides to work for the high school diploma in order to get a better job, to be a better mother, to upgrade one's educational status, etc. Graduation from eighth grade is another generic, often intermediate goal. Other instrumental goals are more specific: to learn fractions to pass a test for promotion, to learn to read well enough to obtain a driver's license,

to gain proficiency in speaking English.

Not everyone in ABE has a specific goal (or goals) that can be "instrumentalized." Some attend class for mostly social reasons. The mentally retarded and emotionally disturbed come because they have no place else to go. For this small minority, the locating process is largely irrelevant. There are also those whose goals are vague. Many self-improvers do not aspire to high school equivalency as an instrumental goal, they simply want to "better" themselves in a relatively unspecified way. People in this category, nonetheless, feel the need to assess their progress in some fashion.

A chronological dimension is basic to the locating process. The ABE student usually has some notion of how long it will take him to reach his goal, although that notion is continually revised as he moves through the program. Most students enter ABE with unrealistic expectations of the time it will take to achieve their objectives. One man, who reads at the second grade level, estimated that it would take him three months to pass the eighth grade equivalency test. It is very common for students who enter at fifth or sixth grade reading level to anticipate passing the GED exam in a year. After a few weeks in the program, perhaps only a few sessions, the student is forced radically to revise his time-table. Many become discouraged and drop out at this point. Those who continue shift from a short-term to a long-term time perspective:

When I first came here, I wanted to brush up for a month or so on my English. I wanted to get through here really quick. But now it looks like I will be here for a while, at least until the end of the year.

Although there is a shift to a longer time perspective, the ABE student is seldom very precise in his estimate of the time necessary to reach his goal. This is not surprising since the ABE program, unlike other educational systems, is not chronologically structured. The youth entering college knows that he will complete his degree in four years. College takes four years. In ABE, however, time is a variable that depends on such factors as initial achievement level, effort, ability, etc. Time, then, is never definitive for the ABE student attempting to locate himself. He must rely on other benchmarks to measure his progress.

Benchmarks can be classified into two major categories: academic and non-academic. At least three types of academic benchmarks can be identified. The first are "order of content benchmarks." The student soon learns that multiplication follows addition and that modifiers follow nouns and predicates. These benchmarks are chronologically sequential. Students often define their achievement level by order of content benchmarks: "I'm on fractions,"; "I haven't come to decimals yet."

Another type of academic benchmark might be called standardized. The "standardized benchmark" constitutes an invaluable datum in the locating process. It is objective and unambiguous. For example, the teacher or counselor may tell the student his grade level,

Joe said that he read on a 3.8 level and was at level 5 in math. He thought he must read at least on the sixth grade level to get into a training program.

For those interested in the high school equivalency diploma, the eighth grade minimum competency test is a standardized benchmark. Tests in general fall into this category of benchmark, as does feedback from reading machines and from programmed texts and statements by the teacher or others. Promotion to a higher class level is an important standardized benchmark.

"Indirect academic benchmarks" also provide clues to students about their academic progress. Some teachers customarily call on their best students to recite in class or to answer difficult questions. Students are aware of this differentiating behavior; to be called on is to be identified as "better." Similarly, a teacher may ask a more advanced student to help a slower classmate with a particular problem. Differentiation in the amount or difficulty of work assigned, either in-class work or homework, is another variety of indirect benchmark.

Non-academic benchmarks are simply indicators of progress that are found outside of the classroom. A job promotion is one example. But these benchmarks are more frequently less spectacular; a student finds he can read the newspaper with greater comprehension, a typist discovers she doesn't use the dictionary as much as she used to. One woman found that she understood the word "veto" when the President used it on T.V. For another woman, increased literacy lead to a kind of revelation,

She began 'looking around more,' in the stores, outside of school--and reading signs, etc. She finally came to 'find out what people are saying.'

The locating process in ABE is not easy, nor does it come naturally. The student learns to "dope out" his academic timetable through observation, trial and error, and asking questions. Benchmarks are often muted, sometimes unreliable and seldom definitive enough to permit an accurate assessment of progress.

The paucity of clear-cut benchmarks in ABE gives rise to feelings of confusion, uncertainty, and frustration among many students, particularly those who have specific goals and are serious learners. Order of content and indirect benchmarks provide some indication of progress, but often do not tell the student where he stands in relation to his goals. They provide information relative to other students ("I'm on fractions, Joe is learning multiplication.") but not in relation to a particular goal, such as passing the GED examination.

Standardized benchmarks, such as promotion to a higher level and achievement test scores, do provide the locating information that students want, but they are rare in ABE. For example, promotion to a higher level may never occur. Often in ABE, particularly in decentralized facilities, there may be no higher level class. And many teachers keep students in class until they are ready to leave the program. Testing and counseling could also provide students with clear indicators of progress but seldom do. If there are counselors at all, they are usually spread so thin that they are unable to establish effective relationships with students.

Frequently, students are unaware of the existence of counseling services. It is not uncommon to find students who have never been tested, although most programs purport to administer standardized tests at regular intervals. Even when students are tested, they are seldom told the results unless they ask, usually because the tester does not want to be "discouraging." It is true that some students dislike and resist testing. But the fear of tests tends to diminish with time. At the very least, testing could be available for those who want it.

Obstacles

Most students come to ABE to learn, but many soon discover that the learning environment is far from ideal. The major cause of dissatisfaction is not poor teaching per se, or inadequate materials, or dilapidated facilities as administrators are wont to think. Major obstacles to learning that are repeatedly articulated by students are 1) the continuous stream of new arrivals and 2) lack of homogeneous grouping by achievement level.

ABE administrators understandably tend to make a virtue of necessity. Pressure to keep enrollment figures high appears to be largely responsible for the common practice of continuous enrollment. It is said that this practice ensures that no one will be deprived of the opportunity to participate. It also ensures a series of continuing setbacks to learning in the classroom. Students who enter in the middle of a term require an inordinate amount of the teacher's time. Often late enrollees are not carefully screened and are placed in the wrong class, which further compounds the problem. Students have suggested a number of feasible measures that can be taken to deal with this problem. One is that a special class be established to accommodate latecomers. A variation of this would be the "feeder"

class, which would accommodate newcomers until their needs could be diagnosed and referral made to a regular class. Another suggestion is that enrollment be permitted only at the beginning of a specified term.

The enormous variation in achievement level and ability in ABE is a function of the diversity of the student population. Efforts to establish reasonably homogeneous levels of achievement in ABE classes are hampered by inadequate diagnostic and placement procedures, limitations on the number of classes in a particular facility and reluctance of many teachers and students to part ways when it is time for advancement. The plaint of many teachers that they cannot handle a one room school house is underscored by student dissatisfaction: "The reason I'm not learning enough is that there are too many levels here."

There is one final problem sometimes voiced by students. It is a problem that ABE can do little about: racial discrimination in employment. Some students believe that even with a better education they may not be able to find a good job but, without it there is no chance.

I try to stay because it's the only way to break through these jobs. But there's so much prejudice.

The ABE student believes, at least tentatively, that education is a key to a better life. Many in the inner city ghetto, particularly the young and the so-called hard core, believe otherwise, which is probably why they remain on the street corners instead of coming to school.

In a very real sense ABE programs are "creaming" operations. The very poorest are most likely to be excluded. Exclusion of persons less socialized to middle class styles and school practice has advantages and disadvantages. The program is more likely to enjoy "success," teachers can handle students more easily, adult educational institutions will be able to avoid large scale change. But ABE cannot pretend to have developed an organization, administrative practices, or methods and materials relevant for any but a limited segment of its target population. To reach the hard core illiterate and the disillusioned high school dropout will require radical program innovations and a financial commitment by government of a magnitude unknown in Title III. There is little evidence to date that this job can be done by the public schools.

V. TEACHERS AND THEIR PERSPECTIVES

The Teachers

The average ABE teacher is white, in his late twenties or thirties, and teaches public elementary school classes during the day. In the six cities studies, they appeared to be fairly evenly divided between men and women. In most cities, a significant number are members of minority groups. Administrators are clearly aware of the advantages of recruiting minority group teachers, but estimates by officials of the number of such teachers vary even within the same city. Recruiting difficulties stem from the small numbers of college trained minority group teachers in most public school systems, a factor exacerbated by sharp competition from better paying occupations. Relevant minority group membership is clearly an advantage to a teacher candidate in ABE.

With few exceptions, teaching in ABE constitutes an attractive and lucrative form of moonlighting, a part-time involvement and commitment for public day school teachers who are usually given priority in recruitment. Training in remedial reading is considered a special asset. Certification requirements limit hiring teachers from outside the system to those with previous professional training, usually experienced teachers whose family responsibilities preclude full-time employment. ABE teachers may be required to have taught in the city for a specified period.

There is a widespread assumption that the most relevant qualification for teaching in ABE--especially basic education classes as opposed to ESL--is experience teaching reading and

arithmetic in the elementary school. So elementary school teachers are most frequently selected. High school teachers are more common in ESL classes. Some officials feel that secondary school teachers find it more difficult to relate to students in individualized instruction. The widespread assumption about the advantages of using elementary school teachers in ABE is tempered by a common and justifiable concern that in itself this experience is not sufficient. Previous training or experience in teaching adults is considered an important asset. There is common concern over the dearth of relevant graduate training for ABE teachers.

In California, certification in adult education is one of the options available to ABE teachers, but the required courses are seldom offered by colleges and universities with substantial experience in ABE. Institutions of higher education sometimes cooperate with city boards of education to provide in-service courses or a pre-service seminar. But such training is often superficial and seldom involves systematic analysis of specific ABE classroom experience.

There are those who believe that, aside from professional training in teaching educationally deprived adults, elementary school teachers need additional training in at least one specialty, such as teaching reading or mathematics, to be successful in ABE. A great many outside the system and some within question the relevance of professional certification for ABE teachers.

The selection process is often informal. The ABE director, supervisors, counselors and adult school principals search out promising candidates from within the school system. ABE teachers

often refer friends to supervisors or directors. Interested candidates may be placed on a waiting list and used as substitutes until a vacancy occurs or referred to an orientation seminar, the satisfactory completion of which qualifies them to fill future teaching vacancies. Or they may be recruited by the personnel department of the city schools and their name added to the list of teachers. Final selection is usually made by the ABE director, or, less commonly, by school system personnel departments. There are usually plenty of candidates.

ABE teachers are almost never fired, in part because administrative procedures for doing so are cumbersome. In a few places, teachers are eligible for tenure after three years. In many cities, the vigilance of teachers' unions precludes the practice of skipping over a weak teacher for reappointment the following semester. Frequently, the adult education program is included in the board of education's contractual agreement with the teachers union. In some places teachers receive fringe benefits comparable to those of day school teachers or partially so. Sometimes, where benefits are mandated and funds limited, the problem is evaded by hiring teachers as substitutes.

As individuals, ABE teachers are frequently personable and outgoing. A great many are pursuing graduate degrees. Many have had a rich variety of experiences in jobs far removed from education--as policemen, laborers, secretaries, musicians and peace corpsmen. Personalities and personal styles range from square to swinger.

Motivation

The marginality of ABE precludes a teacher attaining prestige and status through ABE comparable to a professional career within the mainstream of the school system. There is no exclusivity by virtue of specialized training and seldom opportunity for promotion or tenure.

For most motives are mixed. But the predominant reason for teaching in ABE is money. This is often a source of embarrassment, but is universally recognized. Teachers who need to earn extra money turn to what they can do best--teach. Moonlighting in ABE permits them to maintain their professional self respect in a way that a night job as saleswoman, waiter, or gas station attendant could not. A convenient schedule of working six to nine hours a week at a salary of from \$6.50 to \$10.00 an hour is an attractive proposition.

Mr. Jones had been teaching at I.S. 284 for about a year. As summer neared he spoke to his principal who is a supervisor for ABE about a summer teaching job. There was none that summer, but a position in ABE was opening up in October. Jones took it.

While for many, teaching in ABE is just a good part-time job, others have different or more complex motives. Few who stay in the program fail to find rewards other than money alone.

Mr. Peterson said that originally he had taken the position as a project teacher to have something to do with his evenings. He explained that later he became interested in assisting adults to better themselves. He went on to relate some experiences with former students who had gone through his class into the high school classes and to practical nurse training.

Mr. Harvey originally began substituting in the evenings in order to pick up some extra money, but after doing this for a while, he decided that he really enjoyed teaching in the ESL classes and accepted a regular position on the evening staff, teaching two nights a week.

One major motive is service. Teachers see ABE as a unique chance to use their professional training at the cutting edge of significant social change--"where the action is." They value the opportunity to help victims of social injustice and educational deprivation and to give personal leadership to the struggle of oppressed minority groups to help themselves.

We're giving them something which society cannot: quality education, psychological relationships. We do far more than what's expected. We provide a means of education for people who would not have access otherwise.

These are the teachers who see their role in ABE as an opportunity

to teach them the basic education they need in everyday life. Just to give them a feeling that they've accomplished something, attained their goal--whatever it may be.

to reach out into the community for people who don't have an education and make it available.

Service motivated teachers include those who "want to be more than a teacher" to students. "You have to be very kind to them. I end up taking them to hospitals and translating for them." Others want to help students to cope with their environments or to teach "latent lessons," e.g., how to learn, to gain self-confidence, to know the value of self-discipline.

Many teachers are attracted to ABE because of its relative lack of the disciplinary and motivational problems common in elementary and high schools. Students come voluntarily because they want to learn. It is generally unnecessary (and undesirable) to attempt to enforce a tight degree of control over the conduct of adults in the classroom Teachers say,

I teach elementary school....This is why I love teaching night school. It's a relief to come here at night. No discipline problems. Everybody is ready to go, all ready to work.

The relatively flexible certification requirements of ABE compared to elementary or secondary education attract some teachers. Although it is true that most ABE teachers are credentialed and employed elsewhere in the school system, in some cities a sizeable minority are not. They may teach on a provisional credential or in a substitute capacity. For this group, teaching in ABE is the most accessible point of entry into public school work.

A few work in basic education because they cannot get into ESL or adult high school work, which they deem more desirable.

Mr. Benson mentioned to me [the observer] that he missed school last week because he was angry with the administration of the school and therefore decided not to come in. He said that a new teacher had been hired and had been offered a high school class to teach. Mr. Benson was upset by this since he had made it known that he preferred a high school class, and he had assumed that he was on good terms with the principal, so that he should have received the class instead of the new teacher.

Institutional flexibility and the autonomy afforded by the ABE program often attract teachers. They are seldom under pressure to complete a particular unit within a given period of time. Students work individually at their own pace. The tyranny of testing is relatively relaxed and student competition is lacking. Relative lack of supervision means an unusual degree of teacher autonomy. There is seldom a required curriculum or pre-determined course of study. Methods and materials have not been prescribed. The teacher decides what and how to teach.

The ambiguity of this highly unstructured educational milieu appears to some teachers as a special challenge. Confronted with a heterogeneous class of adults, the teacher must somehow determine levels of performance and ability and utilize appropriate methods. When he discovers that the class involves three, four or even five levels of achievement, and a great variety of student expectations, the teacher must draw heavily upon his own ingenuity.

Besides the money, I enjoy it. It's rewarding, keeps my mind alert. I'm always thinking of new ideas and techniques. You feel a sense of accomplishment maybe more than in the day, a sense of power.

For whatever combination of these factors, most teachers are highly motivated and dedicated to teaching in ABE. There is a widespread realization that "you've got to sell yourself" to the students, and they try hard. More time may be devoted--without pay--to preparing for evening classes than for regular day classes. Teachers often serve without compensation on curriculum committees and in in-service training sessions. On rare occasions, they even

teach on days when classes are not officially held rather than disappoint students.

Perspectives

Teachers see goals of the program as student defined. It must be so if they are to hold students in their classes. This attitude is reflected clearly in the answers teachers give when asked about program objectives.

To give adults the basics and prepare them for high school equivalency. But we find ourselves with a group of students who have different needs, and we tend to address ourselves to these needs. Therefore, the goals are changing with their needs.

Whatever they want....

The diversity of student goals is clearly seen.

They [the highly motivated] want the high school equivalency. Others say, 'If I can just pass the eighth grade,' or they want to pass a test to enter a [job] program. They're less motivated if they have a less concrete goal. If they need math, they push for that. As for the very elderly, whatever I do is o.k. They're too old for a better job.

I get the impression that many of them come here for a social outlet. They want to take a back seat. Some only want English and won't do math. They really don't give it all they have. Unless they're taking a test for a job, they lay heavily on English.

The class in which almost all students are working toward high school equivalency or any other single objective is the rare exception. Equally rare is the class with most students at approximately the same level of achievement or ability.

Although they see their role as facilitators in a program the direction of which should be dictated by student goals, teachers

do make decisions about who they can and will reach.

The slower students or those who are obviously more lost tend to sit in the back and only interact in repeating what the other students are repeating. But they seldom answer questions. When I asked Mr. Pascoe about this later on, he said that he feels his greatest responsibility is with those students who come night after night. He tries to help the slower ones but he cannot hold back the progress [of the regulars] for those who are there now and then.

They define the criteria of their success in the program cautiously. For some it may be simply

Seeing them achieve something. To see that they accomplish what they want to do. Some are very frustrating--they're never going to make it. It's the way they were taught when they were in school.

For others, success is defined in terms of "latent lessons":

Well, I would say I'm successful if I've even gotten these people to like learning, to want to work, to want to put themselves into it. For many that's the most I've been able to do.

Teachers resist defining success in terms of their students' reaching such long range goals as eighth grade or high school equivalency. The proportion reaching these goals is small.

Success or progress in working with students is most frequently defined in terms of small increments in learning, such as mastery of fractions, and of psychological benefits, such as increased sense of personal worth and self confidence. This is understandable in light of the broad diversity of students and their goals. Because some lack ability or incentive to learn to read and write, but come

to class for other reasons and by legal definition are welcome, teacher success in dealing with students is framed in terms appropriate to diverse student needs. Teachers take satisfaction in the academic progress of students who are serious and capable learners, in the continuing interest of those who are "regular attenders," and in the bookkeeping advantage of the occasional attenders.

Most feel they are accomplishing something, but have realistic perceptions of how difficult their job is and how slow progress comes. They frequently take refuge in the conviction that there are important intangible "latent lessons" being learned even when there is little evidence of student progress in achievement toward literacy per se.

Teacher-perceived problems of administration and supervision appear to increase disproportionately with the size of the program. This is understandable, but specifics are worth noting by administrators in charge of growing programs. Centrally based administrators, as distinct from supervisory staff with responsibility for one area or a multi-class site, are sometimes seen by teachers as remote. Some teachers have never met the ABE director. Others have seen him only once or twice at a general meeting. Although teachers do not expect the director to be continually in contact with them, complete invisibility becomes a symbol of lack of interest by the administration. Teachers-in-charge, who are supervisors in a multi-class site, occasionally themselves complain that a director has "no idea about the extent of the work involved and doesn't even bother to send a word of thanks or praise." Teachers sometimes have no knowledge of the administrative structure

of ABE and little or no contact even with supervisory personnel. This may result in an attitude of "I'll just do the work the way I see it and not give a damn about them."

Administrators are most often faulted by teachers for lack of responsiveness to their ideas for change, lack of curriculum leadership, and failure to understand problems at the classroom level. Inadequate materials and logistical problems are particularly vexing. Interviewers write:

He spoke of the personal frustrations which he has experienced as a teacher in the ABE program-- insufficient funds or support to institute changes which he feels are necessary, lack of interest... [in] the difficulties which the teacher experiences in the classroom, unrealistically high expectations in terms of content....

Mr. Stanton stated that one of the big mistakes made by administrators of the ABE programs is that they do not treat students as individuals; that they outline programs which do not take the various life experiences of the adult student into account and which tend to insult his intelligence. He particularly objects to textbooks written for children rather than adults.

One perennial problem he feels is the administration's tendency to look upon the adults as they look upon younger children. When teaching or designing a program to reach adults, he feels, one must keep in mind the fact that adults can easily become bored with the traditional teaching methods.

In general, teachers feel that supervision is inadequate, that they have little help with curriculum development or other problems that arise.

You could use more supervisors. I get the impression I only see them in an emergency, not as far as real personal problems of teaching a class. We don't get much of that. It allows me to do what I want, but assuming that they know more [than me], I feel I could be told more.

Supervisory staff and counselors characteristically have far too many teachers to supervise (as many as 30 scattered over 15 sites) and too little time in which to do it (often 10 to 12 hours a week). Teachers may strongly identify with a resident supervisor or teacher-in-charge who is conscientious and deals with them as fellow professionals, even to the point of transferring to another part of the city when he is moved.

Speaking of the previous TIC he worked under, Mr. Bagley said, 'The other guy, I wouldn't give him the sweat off my ass. He's [the new TIC] the only one I know who spends 40 hours a week and only gets paid for 15. He won't screw you, and he'll defend you with the supervisor. He's the kind of guy who can tell you that you have two weeks to straighten out. We've got the best unit in the country.'

Another universal problem is pressure from administrators who play the numbers game. Teachers hedge their bets: "I don't count those who come once and don't stay." "I wait a month before putting them on the register." Sometimes the conflict between keeping up enrollment and effective instruction in the classroom becomes an issue between teachers and administrators.

The principal, Mr. K., called a short meeting of the five teachers who teach ESL at this school in the evening. He told them that he had found out that some students were being turned away, and, rather dogmatically told them this could not go on. The teachers opposed this, saying that they could not begin new classes everytime a student came in and that if a student came in the middle of a class, he would soon lose interest and not return. The Principal did not agree with this and insisted that new students could be accommodated at all times.

Although relationships with ABE administrators and supervisors are endemic problems for teachers, other aspects of the program are sources of concern to them. Lack of effective control to enforce attendance, admit and transfer students, to reward, promote and motivate are widely felt. One of the most universal problems is the student intake and placement process. At multiple class sites, some effort may be made to sort students into different classes by achievement level. But even here this is seldom done. Commonly, the student is not screened at all but simply asked which class he wants to enter on the basis of his own often inflated report of past schooling. Or, he is placed in the class with the lowest enrollment. Placement tests are rarely used. In single class sites, anybody who shows up is welcome. Even if a program has a procedure for screening and placement, the teacher may be unaware that it exists.

A teacher may transfer a student who obviously is poorly placed to another class. But often there is not one conveniently located or scheduled, the teacher may be reluctant to reduce his body count, or the student forms a personal attachment to the teacher and resists being transferred.

Some teachers are uncomfortable about the absence of benchmarks for assessing their own performance. This concern over lack of feedback on their work in the classroom is one of the reasons they feel strongly about the lack of adequate supervision. In contrast, the ideology of minimum failure accepts a degree of ambiguity in student benchmarks as desirable. "Personal observation" and "subjective criteria" are mentioned with the same frequency as test results when teachers are asked how they measure student progress.

There's no real standard criteria for saying that this person has reached this or that level. Mostly subjective criteria [are used]. Infrequently there are tests. Sometimes I give them my own little math tests. There's the minimum competency [examination]. Only two people [in my class] wanted to take it.

Teachers feel that they do not have students in class long enough and that many students are operating far below their capabilities. Some teachers feel the program has insufficient incentives, that students on stipends would be more highly motivated.

There is a frequently voiced concern among teachers over the absence of intermediate goals for students. The value of such short term objectives is recognized, but little guidance is given on how to define these goals and select appropriate teaching methods to help students reach them. There is much talk of "practical applications" and coping skills--teaching students how to apply for a job, take a test, fill out income tax forms, complain to the housing authority about landlord violations, etc. But relatively little is done in a systematic way to deal with these concerns.

Lack of appropriate teaching material is felt by teachers everywhere. Although some commercially produced, adult, graded materials, such as the SRA and Mott series exist, they are expensive and not widely used, especially in single site classes. Even when available, teachers often do not use them without prodding by supervisors; their use may not be commonly understood. The dearth of instructional equipment is also keenly felt. Teachers react to these shortages with discouragement and sometimes bitterness.

The program is backward. There is no specialized equipment, machines or special cameras. This is too expensive for a school. I don't have a chance to try anything new or innovative. If I bring a tape, I go through hell trying to get a machine.

There are no materials. I ditto my own. I brought it up at a meeting, and they got angry with me. I didn't go to the next meeting.

They also react with ingenuity, assembling their own materials from wherever they can scrounge them.

Mr. Simmons seems to have invested considerable time, and even money, into securing information and equipment which might improve the methods of teaching reading. He indicated several texts and reprints which he had obtained by writing various sources.... He has almost all the equipment he needs for a language lab, secured by 'devious means' through a friend who teaches in the school system and has access to used equipment in the high schools. All Mr. Simmons needs are the tapes, which he may do himself since apparently...the money is not available to buy them.

Finally, teachers are concerned with problems of adapting instructional methods to the educationally deprived adults in their classes. The distinctiveness of teaching adults is a conviction shared by supervisors and administrators as well. Teachers feel that they need more in-service training than is available to them. They recognize that treating adult students like children or talking down to them is a cardinal error.

ABE teachers understand the many legitimate countervailing pressures which account for problems of punctuality, attendance and classroom attention. They speak of the "sensitivity" of adult students, their slowness to catch on and poor retention compared to children, their lack of intellectual curiosity" and the difficulty of sustaining their motivation in academic work. Students are seen as having

been "beaten down" for so long and "told they are stupid" that they need continuing reassurance and support to make the most of their "last chance." Teachers give it to them.

These perceptions help explain the permissive classroom conventions and control which characterize the program. Teachers say, "They're adults; you can't force them." "You can't treat them as children." "They're people just like ourselves with families and children; they only have less education."

Teachers know student goals vary widely, but they are often uncertain about what to do about it in terms of adapting methods and materials to this variety of interests. Although they recognize that individualized instruction is best to cope with the diversity among students, teachers commonly acknowledge that they end up teaching to the middle range with relatively unsuccessful attempts to provide supplementary work to faster and slower students.

I think I'm pretty good. Only thing I find difficult-- I'm supposed to have the lowest class and have a very wide range [of students]. I have a hard time focusing my lesson so every one gets something. If I give some extra material to some, they want to be in the mainstream. Generally speaking, I think I do all right. It takes a lot of time.

ABE teachers everywhere attempt to adapt the teaching methods which have held them in good stead in elementary or high school to their relatively new and difficult classroom situation. There are few known models for doing this, so progress is slow. They want whatever practical help they can get. There isn't much.

In summary, the average ABE teacher is a young, white, middle class elementary school teacher who is moonlighting in an attractive job. Chances for getting hired are enhanced if candidates are from a relevant minority group, have a teaching credential and especially if they have specialized experience or training in remedial reading or adult education. Who you know is important. Recruitment practices tend to be informal. Final selection is usually made by the ABE director or, in some cases, by the school personnel office. There is little teacher turnover.

Money is a major motive for teachers working in ABE. Service is too, especially for those who want to be "more than a teacher" to students. Other factors are greater institutional flexibility and teacher autonomy, preference for teaching adults without the relatively demanding problems of disciplining and motivating children, challenge of an unstructured situation, certification flexibility, and, occasionally, inability to get into ESL or adult high school teaching. Most teachers are outgoing, hard working, and interested in the ABE program.

Teachers see program goals as identical with student defined objectives and gauge their own success in terms of student progress. Student progress is defined by small increments of academic achievement and in latent lesson terms such as learning how to learn and gaining self-confidence. Teachers believe it would be unfair to judge them on the basis of numbers of students achieving eighth grade or high school equivalency.

Central administration is sometimes seen as remote, unresponsive, niggardly, and lacking in understanding of classroom problems.

There is far too little supervision and in-service training. Teachers feel the crunch of the numbers game and the pressures of a continuous enrollment policy. They feel they lack needed leverage to enforce attention, admit, transfer, reward, punish, and motivate students. There is little screening and grouping by achievement levels, even where this is possible.

Absence of benchmarks to assess their own performance and that of students is thought of as a problem, especially lack of constructive feedback on their work in the classroom. There is an emphasis on personal observation and subjective judgment along with tests for assessing student progress. Teachers are uncomfortable about the absence of intermediate goals for students. They talk of the importance of coping skills in this regard, but seldom have a systematic plan for teaching them.

There is an acutely felt lack of instructional materials and equipment in most cities, especially in single class sites. Teachers resent it, but make do with what they can scrounge.

They are concerned over the distinctive problems of teaching adults in ABE and want to help in adapting instructional methods and materials to adult students. Teachers recognize the importance of the failure syndrome of the ghetto. Most are admirably patient and encouraging.

VI. COUNSELING PRACTICE

There is a lack of consensus as to the most effective role for counselors in ABE. Some do little else but testing. Others are prodded by supervisors who believe "coping with the system is the name of the game," and that counselors should concentrate on helping students deal with the power structure.

The counseling efforts range from a system with a specialized staff of 13 part-time counselors coordinated by a supervisor of guidance to those in which counseling is left solely to teachers. Even with a separate counseling staff, the amount of counselor time available to students is limited, and the teacher is seen as central to the counseling function.

In a city with a large staff, counselors are each paid to work 10 hours a week, although actual time in the program exceeds that limit by many hours. They are required to be certified with 30 graduate credits in guidance, but it is possible to meet this requirement after employment. Most come from the city school system with a counseling background, though a number hold full-time jobs with other agencies or training programs. One is assigned to a learning laboratory, the others deployed to decentralized school locations from which they cover a number of separate class sites. The counseling staff meets monthly. The guidance supervisor who acts as a coordinator, resource and liaison person, conducts individual and group conferences with the counselors, supervises in-service training, and makes contacts with agencies that can offer job placement or training opportunities to the ABE students.

In another city, part-time counselors, supervised by the central public school director of guidance and assigned to the day school system, make some time available to the ABE program. Although certified by the state, none are required to have specific training in working with ABE students. Informed observers feel they reinforce a traditional academic emphasis of the ABE program at the expense of developing "coping" skills in students.

Where there are established adult day or evening schools in which ABE classes are conducted, the resident counselor may deal with ABE students along with all others.

In some cities where the ABE budget contains no line for counselors, one or two may be assigned to teaching lines, or funds from other sources may be used for this purpose.

In one of the six cities studied, use of guidance counselors was found unsatisfactory, because the counselors were unable to establish needed rapport with students. Although counselors are used during registration periods, all other counseling is left to the classroom teacher.

Decentralization of class sites requires the counselor based in one school to get around to a number of other class centers. The success of this arrangement is largely a function of counselor time available and maintaining effective communication between counselor, administrators and teachers in the various locations involved. The counselor's task is complicated by the variety of sites for which he is responsible: One covers four schools, each of which has a number of classes, a storefront classroom, classes in a Catholic recreation center, a housing authority community center and a poverty program building. This

system leads to uneven coverage with students in some locations having repeated contacts with the counselor, while those in other sites are totally unaware that the program offers counseling services. One teacher interviewed in a program where counselors are not permitted to test students had avoided testing her class because she thought that this was the counselor's function; she had not been in contact with him at any time during the year. At an evening adult school in another city, a teacher reported that the counselor came to the school on Tuesdays and Thursdays, but students who attended class on other evenings might never see him. One ABE director commented:

People tend to want to see counselors when they want to see them, and if you have classes in three sites so that Monday he is in one place, Tuesday he is somewhere else and Wednesday somewhere else, he is in one site only a third of the time.... There is nothing like telling someone on Tuesday, 'The counselor was here last night; wait until next Monday.'

Counselors commonly attempt to visit each of their assigned locations at least every two weeks; time spent at a given site may depend on the number of classes there and the number of students who have indicated an interest in meeting with him. In most programs they try to meet with each student within a few weeks after he has begun attending classes to help him with any problems that have arisen and to ascertain whether he has been properly placed in class. Contacts with other students are generally initiated by the teacher, either because the student wants to speak with a counselor or because the teacher needs help in dealing with a particular student's problem. After this initial contact, it is common for student and counselor to contact

one another directly. Problems define the counselor's role. The emphasis is on responding to student and teacher initiatives.

Counselors may screen students and place them in classes, test, do job placement, refer students to social service and health agencies, and counsel on a variety of educational, vocational and personal problems. Where there is a large counseling staff, they may also arrange for speakers from such agencies as the League of Women Voters, a bureau of consumer frauds, or the city housing authority. Regularly scheduled group counseling sessions open to all students have been emphasized in one demonstration project with good results reported; however, circumstances were radically different from those in the regular ABE program so that generalizing is precarious.

If a counselor is on site at the time of a new student arrives, it is generally his responsibility to screen and possibly test the entering student in order to place him in the class closest to his achievement level. If the counselor is not available, placement is normally the responsibility of a supervisor or senior teacher. In most instances a simple word test or reading test is devised, rather than using more elaborate placement tests. There is general recognition that complicated testing frightens the new student; those responsible for placement are thought sufficiently experienced to gauge the new student's level. An exception found in one demonstration project stressed the preparation of ABE students for coping with the larger society. Here a more rigorous initial testing procedure was used as a first step in making the ABE student "test-wise." Teachers everywhere complain about the heterogeneity of students within classes resulting from the common pattern of informal placement procedures.

The students tell you where they belong. But they often exaggerate. It's a sad scene.

When the students come in they're interviewed or see the counselor. One reason for dropout is their not being placed properly.

Counselors sometimes ask students to estimate the grade in which they belong, and test only those who are uncertain. Teachers feel that students are poor judges of their own achievement level and often choose the wrong classes. Often students are placed in classes with the lowest enrollments, regardless of reading level.

It is not uncommon where counselors are few or strong emphasis is placed on students' completing an elementary school equivalency examination for counselors to do little except administer tests, a function which could be largely done by aides. Elsewhere counselors are not permitted to test at all-- this is reserved for teachers and supervisors--but are expected to help teachers interpret test results.

Standardized tests are generally administered in cycles of 60, 100 or 200 hours. Results and informal evaluations by teachers are chief sources of information on student progress. Interpreting results to the student may be done by either the counselor or teacher. ABE practitioners disagree about the extent to which students should be informed of their achievement levels. The scarcity of clear-cut benchmarks in ABE is discussed in the section on student perspectives. Even students who have a fairly concrete idea of what they expect to get out of the program often are unrealistic about the time it will take or the grade level at which they are currently operating.

Judith does not know what grade level she is studying in the ABE class. She came to the program approximately two months ago, but has not seen the counselor and no one has explained anything to her about the program's operation.

Carmen has not seen the counselor since she enrolled in class. She does not know what grade level she is on in class and has not taken any tests.

Edward has seen the counselors only once. He has not taken any tests; however, he feels he is making progress since he can recall some information he had forgotten.

Some teachers argue that students should be told where they stand-- that this is the only way to treat them as adults: "I hide nothing and keep nothing from them. I stress at the beginning that they should know what they are doing here and why." Others never tell students the grade level at which they are reading because this knowledge might be too discouraging for the student performing at a low level. The student is told how many grade levels he has advanced over a given period of time. Helping students locate their place in the program both constructively and realistically is a major challenge of the counseling function.

Students are likely to consult counselors about educational or vocational problems, but rarely ask assistance with more personal difficulties. It is often the case that counselors are white and the ABE students black or Puerto Rican. This difference may limit communication between student and counselor. More often it is the teacher who develops a familiarity with the out-of-school life of the student. The counselor may see the student no more than once or twice during the year. This led one city to dispense with counselors entirely.

Problems relating to health, jobs, housing and difficulties in dealing with government bureaucracies probably affect student drop-out

rates more than inadequacies in the ABE program itself. Assistance is clearly needed to deal with at least those distracting social problems amenable to change. Some argue that the counselor should be involved as little as possible with academic concerns but should help students solve other problems which inhibit efficient participation in the ABE class. Where counselor availability is limited however, and teachers are better able to understand the students' out-of-school problems, there are obvious implications for greater teacher involvement in the counseling process.

Teachers do not have the time to familiarize themselves with the various social service and health resources in their students' communities. Perhaps the counselor's role could become one of resource trainer and backstopper for the classroom teacher, making it possible for the teacher more effectively to assume the counseling function.

Intensive counselor involvement in job placement is unusual. In some instances, however, counselors do contact potential employers. Rather than placing students directly in jobs, counselors tend to channel students to state employment services or to job training programs. Most ABE students are motivated to attend class to change their job status. This suggests the need to develop vocational counseling and job placement competencies in the ABE program, either through direct contacts with employers or through cultivated linkages with state or city job placement or training programs. The heavy reliance of ABE programs on word of mouth for recruitment of new students also argues for improving job placement programs. Word of mouth operates with special effectiveness when the prospective student learns of a basic education student who has gotten a new job as a result of his

ABE experience. There is good likelihood that the addition of counselors for vocational advisement and placement would reduce ABE's dropout rate.

Teachers may be best equipped to deal with personal difficulties that plague ABE students, but job placement is probably best handled by the trained counselor who can develop contacts with potential employers and training programs. The counselor, however, who is typically employed in ABE on a part-time basis, is already heavily loaded with diffuse responsibilities and most job contacts must be made during the hours when counselors are occupied with day jobs. A restructuring of the counseling program to focus the counselor's limited time on those areas where he can be most productive is suggested. The provision of a full-time vocational counselor would be ideal.

There is widespread disagreement among ABE practitioners as to the proper role of guidance personnel. Several problems emerge for further consideration--effective distribution of counselor time among decentralized classes, role of the counselor in the testing process, definition of benchmarks to help the ABE student locate his place in the program, division of counseling responsibilities between counselors and teachers, and systems for assisting students who enroll in ABE in the hope of changing their job status.

VII. SO WHAT?

A fair question. If our laboriously constructed description and analysis of the operation of ABE and the perspectives of those involved are to justify the effort and funds expended, they require translation into practical action steps and guidelines for planners, administrators, trainers and evaluators.

Our assumption has been that decisions on how the program should be improved will be enhanced if based upon a dependable picture of existing reality. We have sought to establish this by use of comparative field research methods to elaborate our study of ABE's structure and functional dynamics by gaining insight into the perceptions and evolving interaction of students and teachers.

Pay-off to decision makers depends upon the way this multi-dimensional baseline and analytical frame of reference is used. In its present form we see it as invaluable substantive content for orientation and training of administrators, supervisors and program evaluators at various levels of government. These findings made it possible for us to know what questions to ask in our survey of urban ABE directors which will yield national program norms. We are editing a supplementary collection of field observations of classroom interaction for use as a training sourcebook for ABE teachers and others. Based upon our identification of weak points in classroom practice, we are well into the development of a set of integrated lesson plans with supplementary multi-media kits for teacher training. In next year's study we hope to produce a set of guidelines pertaining to the adoption and development of specific innovative program practices.

In setting out to capture the evolving, many dimensional reality of ABE as fully as possible, it was inevitable that we encountered recurrent problems. These problem areas constitute a "map" and set of priorities for action: for research and demonstration, analysis, and decision making. To facilitate action process, some of the more obvious of these problems are presented below as a set of general hypotheses. The map is incomplete; we and many others will contribute toward its elaboration and refinement. It includes problems with policy implications for organization, administration, program and staff development, evaluation and the allocation of federal funds for demonstration projects.

Action Priorities

1. Employment of a full-time director of ABE programs in urban centers will result in a more coherent, aggressively developed and better administered local program and will contribute significantly to the professionalization and impetus of the national movement.
2. A trend for ESL to displace basic education classes in many inner city areas will be arrested and a stronger basic education program result from separating the two programs in terms of record keeping, standards of performance and criteria for funding. ESL and basic education differ in purposes, methods, materials and student bodies. It is more difficult to recruit and retain basic education students (mostly native blacks). Basic education is more expensive than ESL because of smaller class size and the greater need for aides to individualize instruction. Limited funds and reliance on enrollment figures to justify apportionment of funds have resulted in one-sided competition for available resources which penalizes local directors who push basic education.

3. Important program needs will be better identified and the least desirable effects of the "numbers game" mitigated by officials at federal, state and local levels clarifying explicitly the relationship between enrollment and attendance figures and program funding. There is much action based upon assumption and anticipation without facts. There should be separate reporting of attendance and different standards set for judging program effectiveness in beginning level classes, decentralized classes (especially those in one- and two-class sites), classes in "hard to reach" neighborhoods, ESL classes, co-sponsored classes, new classes, day and evening classes and classes assigned aides.

4. A more effective program with better student and educator morale will result by providing for administrative continuity for the ABE program through high school. The present eighth grade limit makes little sense and is often violated in practice. In implementing legislation to extend ABE through high school, steps are required at federal, state and local levels to assure that the extended program be administered as an integral part of the ABE program.

5. To reach and retain "hard core" (hardest to reach, poorest, chronically unemployed and most alienated) students, special programs, separately funded, are essential. Although ABE is open to all, the program is serving that segment of its target audience most receptive to change, least alienated, least poor and most likely to succeed. This is not undesirable, but there are both humanitarian and political reasons which justify the allocation of designated funds for the much more expensive and difficult job of working with hard core students. Earmarked funds

with entirely different standards for judging program success are indispensable for this. These specialized programs may be established as feeders of pre-literacy programs or as parallel programs to existing courses. They may be administered through the public school system or contracted out to community organizations already working with this sub-group. There is good reason to believe they should be integrated into a comprehensive program of social services and job preparation and placement or actual employment. A considerable community of opinion holds that this type of program should be administered separately from the public schools to avoid the standards, credentialing, bureaucratic constraints, traditions and definition of the teacher's role seen as dysfunctional to working with this sub-group. If feeder or parallel programs are instituted within the school system, special dispensation to assure flexibility is essential. The several federally funded demonstration projects designed for working with hard core students need careful study to determine whether their organization, staffing and methodological innovations are working, whether they are in fact recruiting and retaining hard core students and whether these high cost unorthodox efforts are capable of being institutionalized within ABE programs in the public school system.

6. Enrollment and rates of retention will be significantly increased by the introduction of child care facilities. Women with young children constitute a major segment of ABE's student body. It is not uncommon for mothers to bring small children to class rather than forego the opportunity for educational and job up-grading. Child care facilities would introduce possibilities for joint educational programming for mothers and their children.

7. Allocation of funds to cover student bus or subway fare will markedly increase enrollment and retention rates, especially among the poorest students. There is evidence that many do not attend because they cannot afford transportation costs.

8. Assigning priority to allocating aides and volunteers to basic education classes located in sites where only one or two classes are offered will increase student performance in these classes and significantly increase retention rates where the need is greatest. A second priority which will contribute to program improvement is to assign aides to beginning level basic education classes.

9. Drop out rates will be reduced and student performance improved in multi-class sites by accommodating late enrollees in a "feeder" class. This would enable accurate assessment of achievement and ability level as the basis for placement in other available classes. Individual counseling and program orientation could be emphasized in the feeder class.

10. There will also be an increase in retention and student performance in multi-class sites if responsibility for screening and placement is assigned to one or more qualified persons and students are placed in appropriate classes based upon interview and assessment (e.g., by having them work with graded course materials as a performance test or, in selected cases, by administering a simple diagnostic test).

11. Recruitment of students will be more successful by giving greater emphasis to fostering referrals by public agencies and private -- especially ethnic -- organizations and classes co-sponsored with employers and community groups. Probably no more than 10 per cent enroll as a result of recruiting efforts through the mass media. This may be

due in part to lack of creative use of these media. A corollary hypothesis is that development of a set of high quality, professionally produced, one-minute TV and radio spots, as well as posters for use on buses and elsewhere, will significantly increase initial enrollment. These promotional materials could be produced and distributed nationally with space for local inserts. They should be especially designed for and pre-tested with ABE's particular target groups.

12. A vigorous program of vocational counseling and job placement will increase enrollment and reduce dropouts. This requires employment of a trained vocational counselor. A majority of students come to ABE for job related reasons; referral to public employment agencies has not proved adequate to the needs of this particular group. A record of job placement represents a tangible benefit of advantage in building program support.

13. Retention and student performance will be increased by greater program emphasis on orientation and counseling new and prospective students. Many enroll with only vague notions of what the program has to offer and with unrealistic expectations of the time needed to reach their goals.

14. In decentralized programs a redefinition of the role of counselors will increase program effectiveness by their serving as trainers and resource backstoppers for teachers rather than attempting to deal with whatever problems they encounter in attempting to cover classes held in scattered sites. The counselor could provide needed information on community resources and contacts by compiling current information for teacher kits, provide telephone consultation for teachers,

make appointments with students having special problems, train teachers and aides to administer tests and help teachers interpret test results.

15. Quality of instruction and student performance will be enhanced by employment of a specialist in curriculum and materials development and/or assignment of experienced teachers to a curriculum development team in lieu of teaching assignments.

16. Student retention and instructional quality will be improved if the program legitimizes short-range student goals and instruction is modified accordingly. Many students come to acquire specific skills for specific purposes but are shoehorned into a program oriented toward eighth grade or high school equivalency. Getting a driver's license or passing a specific civil service test requires specialized content and effort. "Individualized instruction" is widely misconstrued to mean individualized prescriptions to meet program rather than learner goals. Maintaining a record of short-term goals achieved would also provide tangible selling points for building program support.

17. Student performance will improve if there is continuous private feedback of their performance, including results of achievement tests for those who wish it. This especially pertains to students at intermediate and advanced levels. The ideology of minimum failure should be less an ideology and more a teaching tactic, especially for new or beginning students and others who require strong and continuing encouragement to offset fears of failure. Most students want to know how they are doing in relation to their goals. Students unable to "locate" themselves are often discouraged and confused.

18. Significant inclusion of education in urban living--consumer, health, family life, human relations, civic education--and "coping" skills in the ABE program will be effected only if deliberate effort is made to set aside time for instruction. In addition, resources must be allocated to develop appropriate curricula, materials and methods and ABE teachers trained and encouraged in their use. Instruction in these areas is typically incidental and unsystematic. Content and skills involved are beyond the experience of most ABE teachers. If content other than the 3 R's is to be included in ABE, federal guidelines should be made more specific and funds allocated for curriculum development. Otherwise, the program will be found wanting in evaluating progress toward meeting these implied objectives.

19. Student performance and retention will be improved by adoption of "supported self-instruction," "loose structure" and "small group" departures from the traditional present-recite/test-correct approach in the classroom. Dimensions of these innovations need exploration through demonstration and analysis. When, for whom, under what circumstances, for what objectives and content and in what combination are they particularly appropriate for ABE?

20. Continuing in-service training--with released time--for teachers, supervisors and counselors specifically related to the distinctive problems of ABE and its students will increase staff performance and morale. Staff development teams involving master teachers and instructional supervisors could prove useful. In multi-class sites, the master teacher, with a lightened teaching load, could perform in an instructional supervisory role, freeing regular supervisors to give more attention to decentralized classes.

21. Training of ABE teachers will be improved and the program professionalized by the collaborative development by professors of adult education and ABE professionals of university and college programs with special emphasis on supervised field experience. There should be built-in salary, time in lieu of teaching, or employment preference incentives for teachers to participate. The program should be related to on-going in-service training conducted by the various school districts. Universities should develop continuing training, consultation, demonstration, materials development, action research and operational analysis services for local ABE programs through a cooperative contract with several districts. Such an arrangement might be established on a demonstration basis with federal funds to test its value with cities agreeing to assume increasing proportions of the cost and direct federal support phased out over time.

22. Teacher performance will be most enhanced by training which focuses upon analysis of actual classroom performance with opportunity for practice and feedback in specific skill areas identified in this study. The range of alternative techniques differentiated in Section III for instruction, failure reduction and control--with practice in their use in a variety of specific classroom situations--is suggested. ABE teachers need guided practice in personalizing abstract ideas, using learning groups, discussion and other methods of adult education to evoke student involvement. How to involve and motivate in the first and early meetings, ask questions, work with an aide, teach "coping" skills, prepare instructional materials for ABE and innovate in using various instructional approaches are training priorities. "Understand-

ing the student population" should be less generalized insights about the culture of poverty from the literature and more inquiry arising out of observed classroom behavior.

23. ABE programs will be more accurately evaluated by developing evaluation models based upon the normative descriptions and analyses of common practice contained in this report and their future elaboration. Such models should draw upon these findings to incorporate benchmarks of qualitative factors of evolving interaction, of the processual nature of program objectives, for ordering the priority of program consequences in judging success, for viewing program consequences as a function of organizational development and to illumine the "why" of the "how well, how fast and how much."

Omitted from the foregoing is a list of program innovations which require further study to determine factors which foster and impede their adoption and development. Illustrative are: use of learning laboratories, use of paraprofessionals and volunteers, co-sponsored classes designed to upgrade employee skills, uses of community relations personnel, locating a majority of classes in non-school facilities, use of full-time teachers, TV instruction, team teaching, child care facilities, computer assisted instruction, community advisory boards, centralized classes, vocational counseling and job placement and use of local residents as recruiters. We will undertake the study of some of these innovations in ABE programming over the next year.